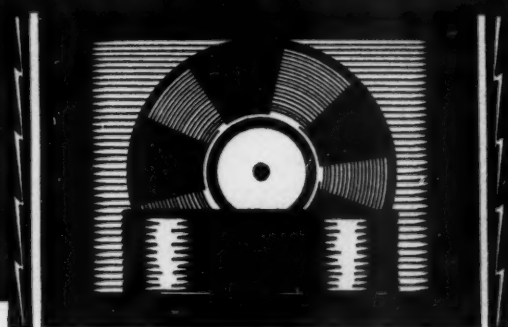


# The Fifties AMERICAN MUSIC LOVER



<b>Ormandy Talks on Music .....</b>	<b>403</b>
<b>A Noteworthy Bibliography, <i>A. P. De Weese</i>.....</b>	<b>404</b>
<b>More About Needles, <i>Leland L. Chapman</i>.....</b>	<b>405</b>
<b>Random Notes on a Musical Tour, <i>Irving J. Stone</i>.....</b>	<b>407</b>
<b>Gustav Mahler, the Symphonist, <i>Klaus Pringsheim</i>.....</b>	<b>410</b>
<b>Overtones .....</b>	<b>413</b>
<b>The Library Shelf .....</b>	<b>415</b>
<b>Record Notes and Reviews.....</b>	<b>416</b>
<b>Record Collector's Corner, <i>Julian Morton Moses</i>.....</b>	<b>435</b>
<b>In the Popular Vein, <i>Horace Van Norman</i> .....</b>	<b>437</b>
<b>Swing Music Notes, <i>Enzo Archetti</i> .....</b>	<b>438</b>
<b>Radio Notes .....</b>	<b>439</b>

# RECORD BUYER'S GUIDE OF THE NATION'S MOST RELIABLE DEALERS

These shops, fully endorsed by The American Music Lover, are equipped to take excellent care of your record requirements.

**SAN FRANCISCO, Cal.**  
Sherman, Clay & Co.  
Kearny and Sutter Sts.

**WASHINGTON, D. C.**  
E. F. Droop & Sons Co.  
1300 "G" Street, N. W.

**CHICAGO, Illinois**  
Lyon & Healy  
Webash at Jackson Blvd.

**CHICAGO, Illinois**  
The Rudolph Wurlitzer Co.  
111 S. Wabash Ave.

**INDIANAPOLIS, Indiana**  
L. S. Ayres & Co.  
1 - 15 W. Washington Street

**INDIANAPOLIS, Indiana**  
Pearson Co., Inc.  
128 N. Pennsylvania Street

**DES MOINES, Iowa**  
Des Moines Music House  
820 Walnut Street

**BALTIMORE, Maryland**  
The G. Fred Kranz Music Co.  
327 North Charles Street

**BOSTON, Mass.**  
The Boston Music Company  
116 Boylston Street

**CAMBRIDGE, Mass.**  
Briggs and Briggs  
1270 Massachusetts Avenue

**MINNEAPOLIS, Minn.**  
Paul A. Schmitt Music Co.  
77 South 8th Street

**ST. LOUIS, Missouri**  
Aeolian Co. of Missouri  
1004 Olive Street

**NEW YORK CITY**  
Bloomfield's Music Shop  
118 East 14th Street

**NEW YORK CITY**  
Center Music Store  
RCA Bldg., Rockefeller Center

**NEW YORK CITY**  
The Gramophone Shop  
18 East 48th Street

**NEW YORK CITY**  
Haynes - Griffin  
373 Madison Ave., at 46th St.

**NEW YORK CITY**  
G. Schirmer, Inc.  
3 East 43rd Street

**NEW YORK CITY**  
N. Y. Band Instrument Co.  
111 East 14th Street  
1166 Sixth Avenue at 45th St.  
1225 Broadway, Brooklyn  
584 Fulton Street, Brooklyn

**NEW YORK CITY**  
Rabson's Record Shop  
100 West 56th Street

**NEW YORK CITY**  
Harry Sultan's Record Shop  
26 East 23rd Street

**NEW YORK CITY**  
The Symphony Shop  
251 West 42nd Street

**NEW YORK CITY**  
Vesey Music Shop  
67 Vesey Street

**BUFFALO, N. Y.**  
Denton, Cottier & Daniels  
Court and Pearl Streets

**ITHACA, New York**  
Lent's Music Store  
116 No. Aurora Street

**RICHMOND HILL, N. Y.**  
International Records Agency  
P. O. Box 171 (Mail orders only)

**CINCINNATI, Ohio**  
The Rudolph Wurlitzer Co.  
121 East 4th Street

**PHILADELPHIA, Pa.**  
H. Royer Smith Co.  
10th and Walnut Streets

**PHILADELPHIA, PA.**  
The Record Shop  
247 South 15th Street

**PITTSBURGH, Pa.**  
C. C. Mellor Co.  
604 Wood Street

**READING, Pa.**  
Wittich's  
635 Penn Street

**WILKES-BARRE, Pennsylvania**  
Landau's  
60 South Main Street

**MILWAUKEE, Wisconsin**  
Helen Gunnis Record Shop  
226 East Mason Street

**LONDON, W. C. 2, England**  
Rimington, Van Wyck, Ltd.  
42/43 Cranborn Street

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

We cannot be responsible for copies not received by subscribers who fail to notify us regarding change of address. As we guarantee return postage on copies mailed out, those not received because of removal are returned to us since the postoffice does not forward second class mail. Subscribers wishing back numbers, not received because of change of address, can obtain same by forwarding us ten cents in stamps to cover triple postage and cost of handling.

# The American Music Lover

A MUSICAL CONNOISSEUR'S MAGAZINE

APRIL  
1937

Volume II, No. 12.

## EDITORIAL

THE editor is gratified to announce that he has been invited to tour with the Philadelphia Orchestra this year to lecture upon the music being performed and also upon the development of recorded music. He will precede the orchestra a day or two, lecturing in all the places in which the orchestra is scheduled to play. The itinerary of the tour will be found in an article in this issue.

Readers and friends are invited to introduce themselves at all points along the tour. For information regarding the dates of the Editor's local appearances those interested are referred to the local manager of the orchestra.

\* \* \* \*

There has been in the past two months a rich output of recorded material. As it has been physically impossible for our reviewers to cover all of it, we ask our readers' indulgence. In the case of the Brunswick-Polydor list, which contains seventy odd discs, we have been able to survey only a few items. The rich harvest of unusual material in this list, however, deserves full recognition; we intend to review them in installments.

\* \* \* \*

The death of Paul Bekker this past month was a serious loss to music, particularly in New York City. For Bekker, in the short time he had lived in this country, had acquired an appreciation of musical performances in their relation to American trends which made of him a most valuable adjunct to American criticism. Forced to leave Germany for political reasons a couple of years back, he came here to be music critic of the *Staats Zeitung*, after having already established a worldwide reputation.

Bekker wrote a number of outstanding books on music, including his *Beethoven*, which is perhaps more often quoted than any other book on the great symphonist, and *Wagner*, a study which has been hailed as most stimulating. His *Changing Opera*, one of the soundest books on its subject, and his recent book, *The Story of the Orchestra*, (his first and only volume written in English, the language of his adopted country), have also been widely praised.

Assistant Editors

WILLIAM KOZLENKO  
PHILIP MILLER

PETER HUGH REED

Editor and Publisher

Associate Editors

NATHAN BRODER  
A. P. DE WEESE

PAUL GIRARD

Circulation Manager

The American Music Lover, General Offices: 12 East 22nd Street, New York, N. Y.

Telephone ALgonquin 4-8363

The American Music Lover, which is published monthly on the first, sells at twenty-five cents a copy in the U. S. A.; yearly subscription \$2.50, in Canada and all foreign countries \$3.00. Its contents are protected by copyright and may not be reprinted without permission in writing. No responsibility is assumed for unsolicited contributions; and in no case will they be returned unless accompanied by a stamped and self-addressed envelope. A month's notice is necessary in the change of an address.

(Copyright 1937 by Peter Hugh Reed)



EUGENE ORMANDY . . . . .

Conducting the Philadelphia Orchestra on Tour

**H**  
an  
of  
"I  
m  
la

fr  
m  
al  
ha  
m  
it  
w

th  
w  
Th  
a  
lis



# Ormandy Talks on Music

## AND THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA TOUR

In a Special Interview

**E**UGENE ORMANDY, dynamic young conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra, which leaves shortly on its second annual transcontinental tour of leading cities of the United States and Canada, says: "Listening to music should be fun. Symphonic music should not be 'understood' by the layman, it should just be enjoyed".

"Many a potential music lover has been frightened away from the great works of music by what some 'interpreter' has told him about it", this young maestro continues. "He has been deluded into believing that great music requires a great mind to comprehend it; that it holds some secret inner meaning which he never could grasp.

"But the average listener seems to forget that great music is great music, because it was written for all times, for all people. That's why music has as many meanings for a concert audience as there are individual listeners in that audience. Even in a piece of

program music, which tells a story, certain phrases are capable of an infinite variety of interpretations. To attempt to force meanings into a composition which has no story is ridiculous. Naturally, knowledge of any subject increases interest in it, and frequent hearings of great music breed love of it.

"Finally", says Mr. Ormandy, "it should be understood that music is not addressed alone to the head, or it would be mathematics; it is not addressed to the emotions alone, or it would have no permanent value. It is addressed to heart, and head, and emotions, the trinity of all artistic appreciation".

Answering the question as to how best to listen to music, Mr. Ormandy replies: "It is impossible to lay down a hard and fast rule on how to listen to music. When we say listen, we mean, naturally, enjoy. No two people enjoy a book, or a play, or a motion picture in precisely the same way. How can we say do this and you will enjoy music? But this much can be said: Music, like all art, gives



JOSE ITURBI



CHARLES O'CONNELL

the listener exactly what he brings to the concert.

"Let the music speak for itself," he advises. "Don't feel that you must force concentration by sitting with your eyes closed or glued to the ceiling. Don't distract your attention by trying to read your program notes or a pocket score while the orchestra is playing. These preparations should be made before the concert. If you wish to learn the score, get one of the many fine recordings that are being made. Just relax. Let the music flow deeply into your soul. The pleasure it gives you will be yours alone. No person in the audience, no matter how learned musically he may be, can chart your enjoyment of the music".

Jose Iturbi, brilliant pianist and conductor, who is associated with Mr. Ormandy in the direction of the Philadelphia Orchestra's tour, confirms Mr. Ormandy's statement very succinctly: "Music is an art", says Mr. Iturbi. "When art has to be explained, it is not art. That holds as well for music which speaks for itself."

Charles O'Connell, who has superintended all recordings of the Philadelphia Orchestra, hails this annual tour as a significant venture in wider musical appreciation. He says; "RCA-Victor is gratified to be able to bring to music lovers of America once again in person, the entire personnel of this great orchestra whose musical performances have long been heard on Victor records." Mr. O'Connell is expected to appear as guest conductor at several points on the tour and in the final concert at the Philadelphia Academy of Music.

Included in the cities which the Philadelphia Orchestra will visit are: April 20 Atlanta, April 21 Nashville, April 22 and 23 New Orleans, April 24 Memphis, April 25 Little Rock, April 26 St. Louis, April 27 Tulsa, April 28 Dallas, April 29 El Paso, April 30 and May 1 Los Angeles, May 2-5 San Francisco, May 6 Salt Lake City, May 7 Denver, May 8 Lincoln, May 9 Des Moines, May 10 Minneapolis, May 11 Milwaukee, May 12-15 Ann Arbor, May 16 Toledo, May 17 Toronto, May 18 Montreal, May 19 Northampton, May 20-22 White Plains, May 23 Philadelphia.

More than 12,000 miles will be covered in the coast to coast jaunt of the orchestra, which follows an itinerary different from that of last year's successful tour.

Page 404

## A Noteworthy Bibliography

A fine piece of musical bibliography in the phonograph field is the catalogue for the new College Music Set. In 1933 the Carnegie Corporation gave a music set to various liberal arts colleges, where it has amply proved its worth. A year ago it was decided to make a complete revision of the material, and to donate forty-five new sets to as many colleges, and forty-five partial sets to selected secondary schools. Prof. Eric T. Clark, of Bard College, Columbia University, and Mr. Philip Miller, of the Music Division of the New York Public Library and the staff of the *American Music Lover*, were entrusted with the selection, and have devoted a year to it.

They have chosen with catholic taste about 940 discs, containing around 800 compositions, representing practically all kinds of recorded music. They avoided the big historical sets, except the *Anthologie Sonore* and Sach's *Music of the Orient*, where the music could not be duplicated on single discs. Nearly all of the records were recorded or pressed domestically.

Mr. Miller has made a model catalogue for the set, much more thorough and detailed than any catalogue we have yet seen for any private or institutional collection of records. This is in the form of a library form catalogue, and divided into four parts — Composers, Mediums, Forms, and Titles. The Composer file starts with a chronological tabulation of the composers. Each main composer card gives the composer's full name, dates of birth and death, a complete identification of the composition by title, opus number, and in cases where doubt might arise, the theme, then the names of the recording artist, and the identifying information about the record.

These cards, in duplicate, are re-arranged to form the Medium, Form, and Title cards. The Form catalogue is remarkable for its minute break-down; there are classified examples of the catch, the blues song, the cabaletta, etc.

In addition to the records, albums, cabinet, and the catalogue, the College Music Set provides a fine specially built phonograph of two separate units (separate turn-table and speaker), miniature scores for the important instrumental works, vocal scores for the operas, and a set of music reference books. Fortunate are the colleges that will receive this magnificent gift.

—A. P. De Weese

# More About Needles

By LELAND L. CHAPMAN

(Editor's Note: The author of this article, an amateur sound engineer, writes to us: "Your splendid article on needles has inspired me to put on paper some thoughts long in my mind." Since these thoughts offer some valuable data on the non-metallic needle, as opposed to our data on the metallic needle, we are pleased to print his article.)

**F**ROM tests conducted on an Astatic Crystal Pick-Up, in which the output at various frequencies was measured with a vacuum-tube voltmeter, I have observed that when employing a non-metallic needle, the output at frequencies above 3000-3500 is somewhat less than it is when a chromium needle is employed. In other words, with the non-metallic needle the higher frequencies are not reproduced as *loud* in comparison with the frequencies below 3000. These tests showed that none of the higher frequencies were completely eliminated by the non-metallic needle, but that the higher frequencies were simply reproduced with less volume. These tests amply support Mr. Reed's observation that fibre needles do not reproduce high frequencies as well as metal needles.

Scratch, as is known, is caused by the irregular surface finish on the record. This may be due to the composition from which the record is made, faulty conditions of cutting during the recording, the improper pressing of the duplicates, or aging or wearing of the record caused by playing. Scratch is simply the reproduction of irregular frequencies above 3500 cycles. It is therefore obvious that a non-metallic needle or any needle which reproduces the music frequencies above 3500 at less volume, will also reproduce the scratch frequencies (above 3500) with less volume.

This action of a non-metallic needle may be explained by considering the function of the needle and the rigidity and elasticity of the material of which the needle is composed. The needle in a pick-up is fulcrumed between its ends and acts as a lever of the first class. The exposed end of the needle is moved back and forth laterally by the variations on the sides of the groove. This movement should be transmitted to the upper end of the needle in the pick-up. The upper end, however, resists movement, owing to the damping in mechanical pick-ups, and to the pressure in the crystal type. The needle, therefore, tends to be

bent by the movement of the exposed end, and some of the movement intended to be imparted to the upper end of the needle by the variations in the grooves is absorbed by the bending of the needle. Fibrous material is more easily bent than steel and the high frequency variations in the grooves, which are of much less magnitude for a given volume than lower frequencies, are more easily absorbed by this bending of the needle.

I do not think that the relationship of the fibrous material of the needle to the abrasive content of the record has anything to do with the elimination of scratch. Any means which will lower the volume of the high musical frequencies being reproduced will lower the scratch level; and vice versa, the scratch level cannot be lowered without a corresponding lowering of the higher musical frequencies.

Machines having a separate high frequency (treble) volume, not tone, control, (for example, the Capehart), and other machines having tuned circuits in the treble tone control (which are capable of lowering the volume of the high frequencies, as distinguished from progressively eliminating them entirely by absorbing in condensers), can achieve the same effect as a fibre needle. The latter is merely one convenient way of lowering the volume of high musical frequencies and therefore, at the same time, lowering the volume of scratch frequencies.

With the mechanics of the problem left behind, the peculiar responsive characteristics of the human ear should be considered before arriving at any conclusion. The magnitude of different frequencies actually existing in the output of a phonograph (or radio) as measured by instruments may be different than the ear perceives. The ear does not hear the various frequencies in the same proportions that they exist at *different volumes*. It is an established fact that the human ear is less sensitive to higher frequencies at a low volume than it is to high frequencies at a greater vol-

ume. Furthermore, this sensitivity of the ear varies greatly in different individuals, particularly in persons of different ages. Therefore, lowering the over-all volume lowers the higher frequencies more (as the ear perceives them) than it does intermediate frequencies.

Persons who always play their phonographs at a low volume, (the volume at which the ear is not sensitive to high frequencies), seldom are concerned with scratch because the high scratch frequencies will not be noticeably perceived by the ear at a lower volume. But the converse is similarly true, and everyone has had the experience of noting how a small increase in the volume control appears to increase the scratch (high frequencies) much more than it does the general loudness of the music. This is because the over-all volume has been raised to that point at which the ear hears the high frequencies more readily. Many well-designed machines include *automatic compensation as a part of the volume control* in order to decrease the higher frequencies proportionately less as the over-all volume is decreased.

Many people prefer a separate control to vary the loudness of the high frequencies separately, in order that the relative volume of the high frequencies may be increased as the over-all volume of the music is decreased, so as to compensate for the deficiencies of the ear. This feature is especially desirable when the responsiveness of any particular ear is different from the average.

This entire question would not arise if the music were reproduced at the same volume at which it was recorded. But it is not; that is why compensation is essential.

Pursuing the matter further, it will be obvious that if the original music is recorded with the high frequencies properly proportioned in volume to the other frequencies *at the recording volume*, and then the record is played at a lower volume, the high frequencies will be less prominent. The whole question of the effect of playing music at a different volume from that at which it was recorded opens a wide field of study.

Applying these facts to needle selection, it is apparent that for people who continually play records at low volumes the steel needle is to be preferred because it reproduces the high frequencies better and helps to raise them to a level which makes the music sound more natural, but because the volume is low

the ear does not hear so well. For persons who play records at greater volumes, the non-metallic needle may be used because at such greater volume the ear is sensitive to high frequencies and they need not be accentuated by the needle.

The effect of scratch on the appreciation the music is also an interesting problem. Many people are not annoyed by scratch. They are so interested in the music that they do not hear other noises. Many other people, while preferring to have the high frequencies at full volume if they could, are considerably annoyed by the irregular noise of the scratch, and their attention to the music is distracted in a manner similar to that in which many people are distracted by irregular noises such as whispering, coughing, etc., in a concert hall. I believe Mr. Reed's conclusion that a true music lover would use only a steel needle applies to persons who are not distracted by extraneous noises. There are many persons who would prefer to hear what they hear free from noises. While sacrificing some volume in the high musical frequency, they are able to lower the noise level to a point where their attention is not distracted by the extraneous noise. Therefore, they are able to appreciate the music *more* than they would if it were contaminated with noise.

Mr. Reed's thoughts on "shouldering" appear to me to be very accurate and to comprise the most important part of his objection to fibre needles. I agree with him that if fibre needles are permitted to shoulder they will do extensive damage to the record and introduce as much noise as steel needles. Any fibre needle which will noticeably shoulder through one face of even heavily recorded music should not be used. I find that B. C. N. "Emerald" needles, (those especially designed for automatic record changers in which the pick-up is mechanically lowered and which require several playings with one needle), will not materially shoulder through a face, and if a newly sharpened needle (sharpened on a mechanical sharpener so as to have a true point) is used for each face, the deterioration of records due to shouldering will be negligible. The lowering of the volume of high frequencies is not so great that the music is seriously detracted from, and at the same time the scratch level is lowered to a point where the extraneous scratch noise is bearable.

(Continued on Page 46)

# Random Notes on a Musical Tour

## AND A VISIT TO SIBELIUS

By IRVING J. STONE

COPENHAGEN has the reputation of being one of the gayest cities in the world. During the summer, musical activity as well as practically all entertainment activity centers around Copenhagen's famous out-door park, Tivoli. Here there is some form of amusement to satisfy everyone, young and old, low-brow and high-brow. There is a large concert hall, where every night an orchestra of sixty or more plays, many evenings with noted soloists. Admission is nominal. The program I heard here towards the end of the summer season was of a very low musical calibre, consisting chiefly of pot-pourris and light music. But that higher musical standards were frequently attained was attested by the fact that an all-Sibelius program was scheduled for a few days later.

An interesting custom in Denmark, and also in Sweden and Finland, is the practice of dining out-of-doors during the warmer months to music furnished by a concert orchestra that in some of the bigger restaurants may number as many as twenty to twenty-five players. The tables are not on the sidewalk, as in France and Italy, but in out-door gardens. The music is good, and the whole thing has charm and atmosphere; to one fed up with dining to strains of a jazz band it is a delightful change.

In Norway, because it was still the summer season, there was no music available outside of restaurants and several vaudeville houses. But while at Bergen I took advantage of the opportunity to pay a visit to



• Grieg's Workhouse, Troidhaugen



Grieg's home, Trolldhaugen, located about ten miles from Bergen. It is now maintained as a public museum, Norway's memorial to its most beloved musician, and has been left intact as lived in by Grieg. The house is built on a sort of hill or knoll, and commands a lovely view of a fjord that sweeps out to the open sea. Grieg's workshop or composing room is down below the house near the sea shore. Here Grieg worked and wrote many of his best compositions. Both in the workshop and in the house there are many interesting photographs and inscriptions from famous persons of the past. Mere words cannot describe the beauty of the scene in which Grieg lived, and he could have had no finer inspiration for his music than the beauty of this remarkable setting, the spirit of which is assuredly conveyed in much of his music. Here, in a cleft in the rock overlooking the scene they loved so well, both he and his wife, who died just a short time ago, are buried.

Finland, in habits and characteristics, is similar to the Scandinavian countries. Here, too, dining out-of-doors prevails, with good concert orchestras supplying the music. Many of Sibelius' lighter compositions find their way into such programs, and there is no question that Sibelius is extremely popular with his own people. The concert season was not on yet when I arrived at Helsingfors, the capital of Finland, but I was accorded an unusual privilege in being able to meet and talk to Sibelius personally. I do not believe that I betray any confidence in describing briefly this experience, while those particularly interested in the music of Sibelius may find a few notes about Sibelius, the man, an interesting feature of this article.

Jean Sibelius lives at Jarvenpaa, some twenty miles from Helsingfors. His home is a very modest one, and is situated slightly off the main road among some tall trees. Nearby on the opposite side of the road, is a beautiful lake, and the entire scene is a typical Finnish landscape. Sibelius, as his music so well proves, is a great lover of nature, and it is easy to understand why he prefers to live thus quite simply away from the city environment. He speaks some English, having visited England a number of times, and the United States once. That was in 1914, when he came to this country to

conduct a special festival of his own compositions, and, at the same time, to receive an honorary Doctor of Music degree from Yale University. He is much more at home, though, speaking German or French. His modesty is amazing. Conceded by practically everyone to be one of the greatest living composers, honored by almost every country in the world, the subject of many articles and books by eminent critics, he yet considered it a tribute that I should come out to visit him while at Helsingfors. Sibelius' welcome was most cordial, and illustrates again the point that often the greatest men are the most modest and self-effacing. This is further borne out by the fact that he is extremely reluctant to talk about himself or his music. He will freely discuss other composers. He does not condemn or find fault with any of them regardless of how they differ from him in aesthetic ideals or technique. At the worst he describes their work as interesting or as more for musicians than for the public. Inquiry as to whether the Eighth Symphony, of which rumors as to its completion have been floating around for some time, was ready yet, met with the same refusal to discuss his own music. Sibelius would not even admit that he was contemplating an eighth Symphony. However, later, when talking to the manager of a music publishing house in England, I was informed that good sources of information had it that the Eighth Symphony had been completed for some time, but that Sibelius refused to have it published or performed until his death, regarding it as his "swan song". How much actual truth there is in this report, I, of course, do not know.

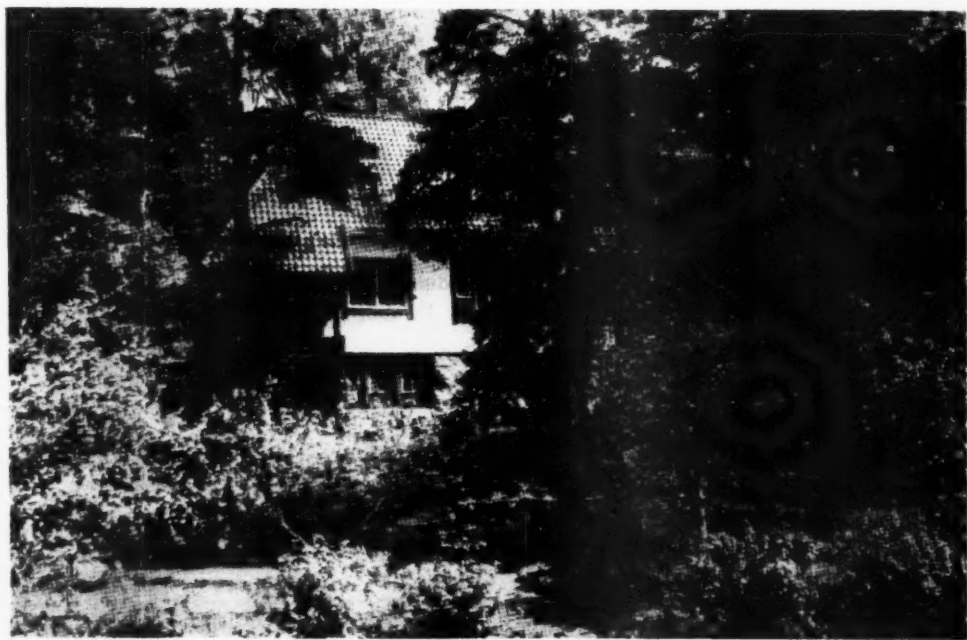
Sibelius has records of most of his compositions that have been recorded, although there were a few minor compositions that he did not know had been recorded. He does not have any other records. A good phonograph and radio is in use, and he frequently listens to broadcast performances. He expressed a high regard for Shostakovitch, his acquaintance with the latter's music having been made via the radio. He believes that records have been a great help in making his music better known, and regards recording as a remarkable achievement. He has received cards and notes from all over the world, sent by various persons who became acquainted with his music through the me-

dium of records. He has never met Heifetz, but regards his performance of the *Violin Concerto* (on Victor records) as a very fine one. It is interesting to note here that until he was about twenty-five Sibelius himself had the intention of becoming a professional violinist, and once performed the Mendelssohn Concerto most creditably. It was only after he was twenty-five that he gave up the idea of a violinist's career in favor of that of a composer.

His characterization of various conductors is similar to his remarks about other composers in that he does not criticise. Every conductor, he states, has his own individual bit to contribute towards the interpretation of music. I inquired as to whether it was true that he did not regard the interpretation of his *Fourth Symphony* by Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra as a good one, in view of a recent report to that effect by a magazine. But the only thing he would say here was that the *Fourth Symphony* was a

difficult composition to record. Nor did he proclaim Werner Janssen as his ideal interpreter, as also reported by a magazine sometime ago. He considers Janssen as a good conductor with a bright future ahead of him, but would not say that he regarded his readings as the authoritative ones. On the other hand, he paid tribute to Koussevitzky for performing his works frequently in the United States.

After talking to Sibelius for about an hour and a half, I left convinced more than ever of the essential greatness of both the composer and the man. Those who would like to get a better insight into the life and personality of Sibelius should read the new biography by Karl Ekman, one of his personal friends. While it leaves many gaps, it still gives many notes and facts regarding Sibelius' life that will be of absorbing interest to those who admire his music. For a good description of the music itself, Cecil Gray's little book that appeared several years ago will be found invaluable.



*Villa Ainola, the home of Jan Sibelius*

# GUSTAV MAHLER, The Symphonist

By KLAUS PRINGSHEIM

(Editor's Note: The author of this article, who is on the faculty of The Imperial Academy of Music in Tokyo, Japan, was a friend and pupil of Mahler's.)

## I

**A**S the creator of nine symphonies — oddly enough the same number that had been composed by Beethoven and by Bruckner — Gustav Mahler has remained, up to the present, the last symphonic composer of really great style and form. The whole of his work represents at the same time a grandiose synthesis of all the musical developments of the nineteenth century, and it exhibits the direct continuation and the utmost amplification of Beethoven's symphonic form that could be conceived.

In creating this form, Beethoven, the greatest symphonic composer of all time, had, for his part, referred to patterns of the eighteenth century. After Beethoven, the development of the symphony, in principle, took two different roads. One of these, the classical-romantic path, is marked by the names of Schubert, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Brahms; the other path starts from Berlioz, who was a pioneer in his field, and proceeds through Liszt to Richard Strauss. It is the way of program music which, in its last consistencies, flows into the field of opera, to which it is allied in its spiritual origin. Thus, on one hand, Richard Strauss, starting from Wagner's music drama and at the same time proceeding from Liszt's principle of symphonic music based on literary inspiration, has eventually, in his operas, summed up the evolutionary tendencies of the Neo-German (*Neudeutsche*) school. And on the other hand, just the opposite way, Bruckner, proceeding from the music of Wagner, whom he adored passionately, has immediately and in a more naive fashion brought new elements to the absolute symphonic form. In some respects Bruckner may pass for the predecessor of Mahler, with whom he shares certain typically Austrian traits and also a touch of Schubertian musical genius. Yet Mahler, who was undoubtedly superior to him in intellectual power and intellectual independence, has, decidedly, gone his own way. He remained untouched by in-

fluences emanating from Liszt's and Strauss' tendencies, and equally he lacked any close relation to the composing manner of Brahms' circle.

## II

Deeply rooted in the soil of Austrian folk music, Mahler, who was not connected to any school or tendency, immediately refers to the later Beethoven, to Beethoven's prophecies rather than to his actual accomplishments. He was striving after the fulfillment of these prophecies with ecstatic devotion and with a hitherto unheard of utilization of resources.

The burning desire to achieve greatness appears as the forceful motive power of Mahler's creative process, if we consider his nine symphonies as a whole. Springing forth from his unshakable belief in his creative mission, this desire manifests itself in a strain of grandiosity, in an impulse to seek the distant and the infinite. This impulse, to be sure, is altogether characteristic of Romanticism, especially post-Romanticism — a romanticism which, nevertheless, may express itself no less typically in the absorbed meditation of a *Lied* with piano accompaniment. But then, Romanticism is rich in contrasts, or at least it seems to consist of such contrasts and to rest on their scintillating coexistence; for instance, on the coexistence of Schumannian lyrical intimacy and Wagnerian immensity, not to say, on such a coexistence as that of Schumann and Wagner. Even in the Romanticist Schumann, and even in the Romanticist Wagner, there is something of this coexistence; even in Schumann, there is a piece of Wagner, even in Wagner a piece of Schumann.

Towards the end of his life, crowning the work of his life time, Mahler presented to the world and to posterity his *Eighth Symphony*; it achieved fame under the name *Symphony of The Thousand*, which, however, he had not given it. It is a work of world-spanning ideas, a work of the most magnifi-

cent tonal proportions and of overwhelming mass effects, like a categorical imperative making an appeal to humanity rather than to the audience of a concert hall — even though this hall was the monster hall of the Munich exhibition park, where he himself directed the première. It was the last Mahler première that we heard under his direction. But, at that time, the finished manuscript of his *Ninth*, and of *The Song of Earth* lay already in the drawer of the writing table in his work-room, at Vienna. *The Song of Earth* is “a symphony for one tenor, and one alto or baritone voice, and orchestra”; yet certainly not a symphony in the sense in which the *Eighth* was one, but a series of forms of the utmost lyrical intimacy, of moods and tints of landscape painting, unspeakably delicate in color and atmosphere. It was the presentiment of the end which the man in his fifties felt near, an affectionate farewell to life and to the world; a vision of imminent death, of the touching, pure, eternal beauty of a dreamily remote landscape; of the landscape of the far east, as an occidental Romanticist saw it and expressed it in music. It became an apex and a masterwork of musical impressionism.

### III

Just as this *Song of Earth* exists besides the *Eighth Symphony*, extreme contrasts exist and persist strangely close one to another in Mahler's creative work as a whole, and in almost every individual work as well. For he was a personality of extreme contrasts; and his creative work was the expression of his personality. If one tried to summarize this creative work in the simplest formula and to sum up in one word what was the essence of it, then, to vary the post-Romantic catch-word “music as expression,” one ought to coin a term like “symphony as expression”. It would be a new name for an artistic phenomenon which, in a sense, seems to have been the product of its historic tradition, but which in fact was new and unique. Many a composer who wrote symphonies after Beethoven did, in truth, not much else than to clothe the material of his musical ideas in a symphonic form, that is, to make it up, or at best, work it up into a symphony. Schubert could give the most genuine, most perfect expression of himself in a melody — Mahler in the whole of a symphony. It is just this which lends inner unity to each of his symphonies; a compelling and, in the highest sense, organic unity, even in spite of all amplitude and almost confusing non-lucidity of form, for which he

was blamed by his critics as often as for his alleged lack of uniformity of style and the seemingly incompatible contradictions in his musical personality. The traits of genius and self-contradiction in his character, as they are reflected in his music, made it hard for his contemporaries to believe in the genuineness of his art and the sincerity of his artistic intentions. Certainly, it was not easy to find one's way between the extremes of an almost child-like, naive serenity and the turmoil and inner conflicts of a desperate struggler. Nor was it easy to trust the ecstatic demoniac who, at the same time, was the most superior, most cunning, and seemingly most conscious master of his technique. Where every artistic effect apparently bespoke the sharpness of an artistic intellect which might have calculated this effect with infallibility, there, conceivably, his contemporaries must have found it hard, unbiassedly to give themselves up to the enjoyment of his art.

Often it is but one step from the genuinely popular to the trivial; where the belief in the genuineness was lacking, the reproach of triviality could not fail to appear. Nothing has more irritated Mahler's adversaries than his unconcern in introducing elements of folk



GUSTAV MAHLER . . . .  
From the bust by Auguste Rodin made in 1910

music into the most pretentious artistic realm of symphonic music. Whence the genuine artist gets his ideas, and thus, whence the genuine artist has properly to procure his inspiration, is a question better left out of discussion. Certainly personal experiences and impressions have essentially influenced Mahler's creative fancy. That irresistibly stamping march rhythm, so characteristic of many of his symphonic movements, to which it gives a warlike, militant character, may be traced back to early impressions and influences of his environment. Reminiscences of soldierlike sounds which the child's ear had caught, reminiscences of the view of troops, marching to songs, and of military signals and fanfares, which sounded over from the neighborhood barrackyard have been translated into basic musical substance which the symphonic composer used as material for themes. The landscape of his Bohemian country, and still more the landscape of the Austrian Alps where he felt thoroughly at home, have enriched the field of his musical imagination; from this atmosphere originated most of his scherzo movements, in which the rhythm and melody of rural dances predominate. Incidentally, such things are to be found in all Austrian symphonic music, from Haydn to Mahler. But Mahler never thought of making folk-lore studies there. There cannot be anything more genuinely and unmistakably Mahlerian than, for instance, such a symphonic scherzo, or one of his warlike, marching *allegro* movements, from wherever their basic musical substance may have been taken. The creative genius does not care about the source, and we care only about the creative genius.

Much was startling and excitingly new in Mahler's symphonies when they appeared; much has since become familiar to the musical ear. But still generations of musicians could learn much from Mahler, especially with regard to his incomparable art of orchestration, proceeding not from Wagner but from Berlioz, to whom he was, as a musical phenomenon, similar in some respects; it seems indeed, as though this art is foreign to a time in which the post-Wagnerian, post-Romantic orchestra more and more degenerates to a means of veiling musical substance, or its absence. Mahler's orchestra does not veil, but reveals; it does not efface, but explains; it does not adorn, but proclaims. In the utmost impressiveness and simultaneous asceticism with which the absolute musical conception is worked out plastically and acoustically down to the smallest details, this orchestration becomes the reflec-

tion of an artistic character of reckless veracity, reckless even against himself. Mahler's technique of orchestration seems formed to his character; the almost paradoxical synthesis of technique and character reveals the secret of his orchestral idiom, which is as convincing in its categorical determination, as it is irresistible in its sculpture-like conciseness and power.

#### IV

Mahler's orchestra and, for instance, Strauss' orchestra are not only two kinds of technique, they are two different worlds. Mahler's world is that of the musically absolute. With Strauss, who subordinates music to the picturesque vision and the literary idea, the orchestra becomes a means to serve decorative and illustrative ends. His way logically led him to the opera — it is in this way that, almost without exception, all composers of the age were driven. It remains a remarkable fact that Mahler, who was director of the Vienna Opera for ten years — and these ten years were the period of its prime — has, as a composer, never departed from his symphonic life plan. As an opera director, who, a born musician, was an unequalled orchestra leader, he has in the classical masterworks, in Beethoven's *Fidelio*, Mozart's and Gluck's operas, and in many others too realized in an unheard of perfection Wagner's principle of the "total work of art" (*Gesamtkunstwerk*), in which all individual arts co-operate to serve the whole. As a symphonic composer, he remains the sovereign creative musician, who also used human language and the human voice as a means of artistic expression, but who never submitted the musically absolute to any non-musical conception. Nothing could be more typical of his composing manner than the way in which, in the *Eighth Symphony*, he has combined a Latin church hymn with the closing scene from Goethe's *Faust* — not to a poetical whole, of course, but in the service of a symphonic whole.

Wherever in Mahler's symphonies the instrumental idiom of the orchestra and the idiom of the sung word, intoned by solo voices or by the chorus, are connected, the latter does not proclaim a program in the sense of program music, but it opens to us a world of ideas and visions which filled the mind and were the inspiration of the composer, and reveals to us the spiritual and

(Continued on Page 414)



# Overtones

A friend visiting the Cotton Club the other night, where Duke Ellington and his Orchestra are featured, remarked to the Duke as he returned to his seat after a dance:

"There's a little bit of Goodman in your orchestra, Mr. Ellington."

"That so!" retorted the Duke with a twinkle in his eye. "Have you been over to the Pennsylvania lately? They say there's a little bit of Ellington in the band over there."

Our friend hasn't visited Benny Goodman at the Pennsylvania as yet but from all reports it's just the way Duke put it.

## American Music Festival

The annual Contemporary American Music Festival given at the Westminster Choir School in Princeton, New Jersey will take place this year on May 4, 5, and 6.

The program will be arranged as follows:

May 4—Afternoon—Bach's *Art of the Fugue* played by the Roth Quartet.

Evening—Forum on Modern Music.

May 5—Afternoon—Modern American Program, by Roth Quartet, Johana Harris, pianist, Joseph Lautner, tenor, and Carl Weinrich, organist.

Evening—Early American Choral Music sung by the Westminster Chapel Choir.

May 6—Afternoon—Modern American Program, by Roth Quartet, Johana Harris and Joseph Lautner.

Evening—Modern American Choral Music, by Westminster Choir directed by Dr. Williamson.

## New Casals Recording

Casals, who has been inactive where recordings are concerned, has recently been busy in the London HMV studios. What promises to be an interesting work is his performance, in conjunction with the London Symphony Orchestra, of Boccherini's Concerto for cello and orchestra in B flat. The work takes three records.

Boccherini, whose creative ability was as spontaneous and as prolific as Shubert's, is

represented by few outstanding works on records. His *String Quartet in A Major*, issued by THE FRIENDS OF RECORDED MUSIC, has been widely praised as the best Boccherini records available today.

## Piano Concertos

Artur Schnabel and his son, Karl Ulrich, have again been busy in the record studios in London, making two-piano concertos. The latest issued in England is Bach's *C major Concerto* which they have performed with the London Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Adrian Boult. The recording takes three discs.

Giesekeing has recorded one of Mozart's last piano contributions, his *Sonata in B flat major*, K-570 (two records), and also Mozart's *Piano Concerto in E flat*, K-271; the latter work with the State Opera House Orchestra in Berlin.

## Beethoven's Second

It is gratifying news that Sir Thomas Beecham has re-recorded for Columbia Beethoven's *Second Symphony*. Music lovers who possess Sir Thomas's earlier recording of this work, made during the Beethoven Centennial, will undoubtedly welcome this news.

## The Kreiner Quartet

The Kreiner Quartet has been invited to play a program of American music at the Biennial Convention of National Music Clubs in Indianapolis on April 25th.

Their program will include the following works: *Third Quartet* by Quincy Porter, a *Quartet* by Isadore Freed, and *Serenade* by Leo Sowerby.

The Kreiner Quartet has recently signed a contract with RCA-Victor to make a series of old and modern works. We are gratified to state that this contract will not preclude their recording for The Friends of Recorded Music.

### The St. Matthew Passion

*The Passion According to St. Matthew*, often called the most popular of all the great choral works of Bach, was given as a Good Friday concert by the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Dr. Koussevitzky, with the Harvard Glee Club and the Radcliffe Choral Society, and the following soloists: Jeannette Vreeland, Katherine Meisle, John L. Priebe, Keith Faulkner and Fritz Lechner. Rumor has it that recording of the entire work was made by RCA-Victor during the actual performance, with Charles O'Connell in charge of the proceedings. We certainly hope that the venture went through with complete success and we congratulate Mr. O'Connell on his arrangement of such an important event.

#### Lotte Lehmann

Lotte Lehmann recently spent a whole afternoon in the RCA-Victor studios making a series of lieder recordings. Her selections were chosen from Schubert, Schumann, Mahler, Brahms and Wolf. We are given to understand that fourteen to sixteen sides were taken with the purpose of forming another recorded Song-Recital by this singer.

#### McCormack to Record

John McCormack, who recently retired from concert singing, is to make a series of arias and songs from Bach, Handel and Mozart as a farewell album to recording.

In line with the above, a new record of Mr. McCormack's recently released in England contains Handel's *Caro Amore* and the aria *Where'er You Walk* from *Semele*.

#### Don Giovanni Recorded

The Mozart Opera Society in England has made a complete recording of the composer's opera *Don Giovanni*. The work is being released in sections, the first of which, already issued, carries through from the Overture to Don Octavian's aria *Dalla sua pace*.

Fritz Busch directed the work and the artists were chosen in part from those who participated in the previous Mozart Opera Society issues. John Brownlee, the new Metropolitan Opera baritone, is the Don, and the three women are sung by Ina Souez (Donna Anna), Luise Helletsgrueber (Donna Elvira), and Audrey Mildmay (Zerlina).

#### Toscanini's Birthday

Maestro Arturo Toscanini celebrated his seventieth birthday in Milan on March 25th

announcing that he never felt better in his life. He is busily engaged at the present time in preparing for his program of work for the coming year. His desk has been piled high lately with congratulations and correspondence concerning his conducting of the greatest radio orchestra ever formed.

The maestro was delighted by a surprise birthday concert by the Busch String Quartet, which appeared in the courtyard of his home, to play a Haydn suite in his honor.

Speaking of the Busch Quartet, whose musicianship the maestro is said to admire greatly, this organization has been busy in the recording studios again. This time they have turned their attention to the last quartets of Beethoven, and recorded the famous Titan's Opus 127 and his Opus 131.

---

### MAHLER, THE SYMPHONIST

(Continued from Page 412)

intellectual background of his composing process. In the same way, there is an intimate connection between Mahler's purely instrumental symphonies and his *Lieder*. Out of the *Kindertotenlieder* developed his *Fifth*, out of the *Lieder eines Fahrenden Gesellen* the *First*. Mahler himself was the (at the time of publication anonymous) author of the *Lieder eines Fahrenden Gesellen* — simple, touching pieces, like folk songs, in which nevertheless all the characteristics of the later symphony composer may be traced. Mahler has not become a poet; the verses which the musician sought, he found later in the collection of poems *Aus des Knaben Wunderhorn*. The popular underlying note of the *Wunderhorn* poems, and of the *Lieder* which Mahler made of them, became the underlying note of his whole symphonic work. The years in which the *Wunderhorn Lieder* were composed were for Mahler perhaps the years of the happiest musical inspiration: the *Second*, *Third* and *Fourth Symphonies*, which are the so-called "*Wunderhorn Symphonies*", prove it. It is the *Fourth* which, as the last of the series, forms at the same time a culminating point in Mahler's work, a point of culmination and of repose before the tempests of the *Fifth* and the *Sixth*. Having originated in the happiest human circumstances, it is music of consecrating purity and of the utmost personal immediateness of expression; predominating in it is the almost child-like serenity, the genuineness of which Mahler's contemporaries have found it so difficult to credit.

## The Library Shelf

**BELOVED FRIEND**, The Story of Tschai-kowsky and Nadejda von Meck; by Catherine Drinker Bowen and Barbara von Meck. Random House, New York, 1937. Price \$3.00.

THE story of Tschai-kowsky and his beautiful and wealthy benefactress is generally known by students of music. He was thirty-seven and she was forty-six when she commissioned him to make one or two arrangements of his own works for her personal use. The discussion of details led to a protracted correspondence between them and to her setting aside a generous sum of money annually for him to devote his time entirely to composition. Most of what is known of Tschai-kowsky's feelings regarding his own music has been derived from the correspondence between him and his patroness, whom, at her insistence, he never met.

The true story of Tschai-kowsky's relations with Mme. von Meck has never been revealed, it is said, until the publication of the above book. Whether it should have been told or not, or whether the strange story here is really all the truth, we will leave to the reader to decide. Certainly this is a revealing book, and a most frank one. Apparently it takes one's grandchild by marriage to reveal all; that is just what has happened in this case, for Barbara von Meck is the granddaughter-in-law of Tschai-kowsky's patroness.

This is a most interesting and absorbing book, skillfully drawn together, a movingly romantic story. Its success seems to be assured, for it has been chosen by the Book-of-the-Month Club, and widely praised.

In connection with the publication of *Beloved Friend*, the publishers have instigated a contest with a first prize of a Steinway Grand Piano, and second and third prizes of Victor recordings of Tschai-kowsky's works. The prizes are to be awarded for the best letter or letters, on one of the following subjects:

1. Why did Mme. von Meck abruptly end her romantic relations with Tschai-kowsky;
2. Was she in love with him or his music?

3. Was her patronage harmful or beneficial to Tschai-kowsky?

For a circular giving full particulars the reader should write directly to Random House, Inc., 20 East 57th Street, New York City. The contest will close on April 15th, and the announcement of the awards will be made on or before May 15th.

—Paul Girard.

\* \* \* \*

**TABULATED BIOGRAPHICAL HISTORY OF MUSIC**, by Oscar Thompson. Harcourt, Brace and Co., New York. 1936. Price \$2.00.

MR. THOMPSON, the editor of *Musical America* and a well known music critic, deserves great commendation for this book. In parallel columns under fitting heads he has recorded what important composers were doing at stated times. This data is assembled on thirteen plates of varying widths beginning with the year 995 and ending with the year 1936. Naturally, Mr. Thompson's history is greatly abridged, but that does not detract from its value or the magnitude of its scope. It is not only instructive but highly interesting to be able to see just what Couperin, Vivaldi, Scarlatti, Buxtehude, Handel and Bach were doing during the period of 1700 to 1724, and again what the activities were of all of the important composers during the last quarter of the 19th century.

—Paul Girard.

---

### Next Year's Philharmonic Broadcasts

Columbia's listeners will enjoy an extra four weeks of New York Philharmonic-Symphony broadcasts next season. The Philharmonic-Symphony Society announces that the 1937-38 season will be expanded to 28 weeks in place of the 24 weeks which the orchestra offered this season. These concerts, with a large list of distinguished guest soloists will be heard every Sunday from 3:00 to 5:00 P.M., EST, over the combined WABC-Columbia and Canadian networks.

The 1937-38 season will open with the first broadcast on Sunday, October 24. The final concert of the series will be heard over Columbia on Sunday, May 1, 1938.

# Record Notes and Reviews

Reviewers in This Issue: A. P. De Weese, Paul Girard, William Kozlenko,

Philip Miller and Peter Hugh Reed

## ORCHESTRAL

**BEETHOVEN:** *Symphony No. 8 in F Major, Opus 93*; played by the Boston Symphony Orchestra, direction Serge Koussevitzky. Victor set, three discs, price \$6.50.

**KOUSSEVITZKY** gives a brilliant and incisive performance of the *Eighth* — a vivid projection of this joyous music. There is much to admire in this performance: the superb teamwork of a magnificent orchestra, the saliency and sensitivity of its playing, the masterful control of its conductor, and the zest and vigor of his reading. It is all on the virtuoso side however, for Koussevitzky stresses the buoyancy and verve of the music rather than its humor and grace.

The *Eighth* is one of the great joys of all orchestral music. It fairly bubbles over with *joie de vivre*, and it pays a rare tribute to beauty's grace in its elfin *allegretto scherzando*, which is the forerunner of Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream* music. Beethoven's love of nature is reflected in the *Eighth*, as well as in the *Sixth Symphony*, and the happiness he pours out in the music can be traced to his admiration of the country: he was in Linz visiting his brother when he wrote it and his view from the window of his room included the Danube and a lovely pastoral scene. Despite the fact that his visit to his brother ended disastrously, since Beethoven persisted in interfering with his mode of living, the music drew all its inspiration from outside the human element, and yet, paradoxically, the symphony is one of the most human documents of its kind ever written.

The recording here is extremely brilliant, as though the recording director and Koussevitzky were of one mind where the projection of this music was concerned. The whole set-up of the orchestra too seems dif-

ferent from previous ones by the Boston Symphony.

In many ways, particularly in the projection of the wind instruments, the balance seems improved, but the submergence of the timpani is not so good. There is also a sharpness in the strings when they play *forte*, particularly in the first and second violins, which is not always pleasant. (A manipulation of controls on a higher-fidelity phonograph can remedy this.) On the other hand, the hall resonance behind the orchestra suggests more the qualities of a peopled auditorium than an empty one. The recording will unquestionably be enjoyed and appreciated most on a modern outfit, for which undeniably it was made.

—P. H. R.

**BEETHOVEN:** *Symphony No. 8 in F major, Opus 93*; played by Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, direction Felix Weingartner. Columbia set No. 292, three discs, price \$5.00.

**NO** sooner had I completed a survey of the new Koussevitzky *Eighth* than up bobs a Weingartner version. The difference between the performances is marked from the beginning. Koussevitzky sharply etches the music, Weingartner shapes it more genially. His Beethoven never has been sensational. He realizes the robustness and graciousness of the music in the equitable manner. Koussevitzky stresses the music's buoyancy, emphasizing the *con brio* part of the marking of the first movement, while Weingartner observes the *allegro con brio* without undue emphasis. I do not think either conductor adheres to the metronomic mark, nor is it essential that they should when such telling results are obtained: Koussevitzky would seem to exceed it slightly while Weingartner would seem to be just under it. This permits Koussevitzky, alone, to observe the repeat in the exposition of the first movement in the allotted spacing of two record sides.

The poetic gracefulness of the slow movement is well set forth by Weingartner's rounded phrases, and his slower paced *minuet* allows for better clarity. His finale on the other hand, has not the youthful verve of Koussevitzky's.

The tone of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra is round and rich in the reproduction here, but the recording is somewhat marred by hall resonance. This is less pronounced and more effective when the wood winds and brasses are prominent, but not so with the strings, which actually echo at terminal points. If one experiences cabinet resonance in reproduction, this is apt to be magnified.

—P. H. R.

\* \* \*

DELIUS: *Society Set No. 2* containing *Sea Drift*, *Fennimore and Gerda-Intermezzo*, *Over the Hills and Far Away*, and *In a Summer Garden*. Sir Thomas Beecham and the London Philharmonic Orchestra with John Brownlee, baritone, and the London Select Choir. Columbia Set No. 290, seven discs, price \$14.00.

IT is most gratifying to find the *Second Delius Society Set* issued by domestic Columbia as a general release. The restriction that the set must be purchased as a unit is due, I am given to understand, to the fact that royalty arrangements with the artists are made in the case of society issues on the sale of the album's contents and not on individual items.

When the Delius Society was formed in 1934, the composer expressed the wish that Sir Thomas Beecham might do all the recording undertaken. Hence, the two sets issued so far have been supervised by Sir Thomas, that great friend of the composer and champion of his music.

The greatness of Delius has been widely contested. There are those who consider him a dilettante and musical amateur, and those who term him a great genius. That Delius' artistry, the purport of his music, fails to sound a recognized universal note may be attributed to the fact that he lived apart from the world in the manner of a recluse. Delius was not a realist; he was a dreamer who created from an inner emotion engendered by prolonged contemplation of some scene or some manifestation of beauty. He sought that mood between waking and dreaming called the mood of improvisation. This was

at once his strength and his weakness. The poetic beauty of his music grows out of tranquillity, and it is this assurance of infinite peace in his music that makes it great, despite its formal weaknesses.

*Sea Drift*, one of the most imposing works of its kind ever written, is the foremost setting of a Walt Whitman poem made to date. Despite its dramatic moments, it is essentially a lyric work, rhapsodic in character. Its length is against it; that is perhaps one of the reasons that it never seems to come off in a performance, for few listeners can sustain its detached mood, its contemplative atmosphere, for the entire length of its performance. In a recording, the necessary breaks are disturbing elements for the retention of the mood; they wake us rudely to an alien world, a world of reproductive mechanism, needles, pick-ups, record changing devices, etc.

In selecting a baritone to convey the main thread of the story, Delius chose the ideal type of voice. His employment of a choir behind the narrator is a master-stroke, for the pathos and sentiment of the tale is thereby perfectly accentuated.

Brownlee sings the narrator's part with dignity and good vocal tone, but it cannot be said that he brings to his singing the feeling required to make of his performance all it might be. The choir, however, is good, and the orchestra, under the direction of Sir Thomas, is splendid. I hope many music lovers will make every effort to know this music, for it will repay them. *Sea Drift* is an experience which defies description; the extreme sensitivity of the composition, its deeply felt emotion, however, demands great concentration.

In the fantasy-overture, *Over the Hills and Far Away*, we have one of Delius' most delightful compositions. There is a nostalgia, a feeling of old scenes loved and remembered in this music, and a youthful verve and emotion that is welcome. The work is well named.

The excerpt from *Fennimore and Gerda* is a mood picture from the last of Delius' six operas.

The idyll, *In a Summer Garden*, is a product of the mature Delius. Its poetic beauty cannot be translated into words. As A. K. Holland says — "this is not an impressionistic picture so much as a record of emotions recollected." The work is dedicated to Delius' wife, and is, in our estimation,



one of the most beautiful tributes ever paid in music to man's helpmate.

Sir Thomas performs all this music in the manner that Delius conceived it and since the recording is excellently realized the composer's interests have been rendered justice.

—P. H. R.

\* \* \* \*

GRAINGER. *Mock Morris*, and *Molly on the Shore*; played by the British Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Sir Henry J. Wood. Columbia 7338-M, price \$1.50.

SIR HENRY WOOD leads the strings of the British Symphony Orchestra in rousing performances of Percy Grainger's *Mock Morris* and *Molly on the Shore*.

The morris dance, popular in England as early as the 15th century, is probably derived from the Morisco, a Moorish dance in Spain and France. This *Mock Morris* does not use any traditional tunes. The strings play with remarkable full body and a wide range in dynamics, an incisive swing, and follow the direction of "always merry and bright."

*Molly on the Shore* is a reel, based on two old Cork reel tunes, *Temple Hill* and *Molly on the Shore*. The airs are repeated time after time, with delicate harmonic changes; the rhythm is insistent.

These two fine dances are jolly music, and they are played with high spirit. The recording is extremely fine.

—A. P. D.

\* \* \* \*

RAMEAU: *Dardanus*—*Airs de ballet* (from *Second suite*): a. *Entrée*; b. *Rondeau du sommeil* (Arr. d'Indy); played by The St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, direction of Vladimir Golschmann; and SATIE: *Trois petites pièces montées*: 1. *L'enfance de Pantagruel*; 2. *Marche de Cocagne*; 3. *Jeux de Gargantua*; played by a Symphony Orchestra, direction of Pierre Chagnon. Columbia disc No. 68887-D, price \$1.50.

RAMEAU'S opera *Dardanus* makes its bow to American phonophiles with this disc, on which it is coupled with an old friend which has been for some time withdrawn from the catalogue. The music, like the recording, is a combination of the old and the fairly new, and, everything being French, it all goes very well together.

*Dardanus* is a tragic opera first performed in Paris in 1739. According to the not infrequent custom of the time, the text, by La

Bruere, was used again in 1784 by the composer Sacchini. D'Indy arranged two suites from the graceful music of the older opera, and this record brings us the first two of the four numbers comprising the second suite. The name of an arranger on any old music is apt to arouse suspicion, but this sensitive musician did no violence to Rameau's orchestration. His work was rather of editing than arranging. Golschmann and the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra present the music in good style, but the recording is shrill and hollow. One needs a really modern machine to cope with this sort of reproduction, and even then satisfactory results are doubtful.

The three little Satie pieces on the reverse are safe enough in any case. Though made some years ago this side will be found satisfactory in every way. As their titles indicate, these pieces are founded on Rabelais, and it is hardly necessary to say that this sort of thing is what the name of Satie stands for. Written in 1921, they show the composer as the prince of satirists. Satie exerted a powerful influence on modern French music, but his works are little known in this country. So it is good to have this miniature suite restored to the catalogue.

—P. M.

\* \* \* \*

MENDELSSOHN: *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Nocturne* and *Wedding March*; played by the London Philharmonic Orchestra direction of Sir Thomas Beecham. Columbia disc No. 68888, price \$1.50.

NOTES on this music are hardly necessary, for these mature products of Mendelssohn's genius are familiar to all music lovers. Sir Thomas plays the music superbly and the recording is excellent. We recommend it unreservedly to all of Mendelssohn's admirers. This is not just duplication but replacing, for no recordings exist of this music equal to these performances.

—P. G.

\* \* \* \*

TSCHAIKOWSKY: *Marche Slave*, *Opus 31*; played by the Boston 'Pops' Orchestra, direction Arthur Fiedler. Victor disc No. 12006, price \$1.50.

Edwin Evans tells us that this march was "constructed from a few South Slavonic or possibly Serbian airs, and the Russian national hymn. Its origin is due to a concert given for the benefit of the soldiers wounded in the war between Turkey and Serbia. Pan-Slavism was thus the order of the day and is written large in the music."

This is a splendidly played performance. Fiedler puts the necessary vital note into the music and gives it the dynamic punches it requires. A knock-out, we call it. As to the recording, it is of the best.

—P. G.

\* \* \* \* \*

ROSSINI: *Barber of Seville, Overture*; played by Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, direction Wilhelm Furtwaengler. Brunswick-Polydor disc No. 95057, price \$1.50.

WEBER: *Der Freischuetz, Overture* (3 parts) and *Intermezzo to Act 3*; played by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, direction Wilhelm Furtwaengler. Brunswick-Polydor discs Nos. 95030-31, price \$3.00.

FURTWAENGLER shows his artistic versatility in these two overtures. Both are played with fastidious care and considerable precision, and the spirit of each is evoked with the proper élan and feeling. His brilliant and musicianly reading of the *Barber of Seville Overture* ranks with the Beecham and Toscanini Rossini recordings, and his poetic interpretation of Weber's lovely music is most expressive. The recording is full, rich and clear.

—P. H. R.

\* \* \* \* \*

WALTON: *Portsmouth Point, Overture*; played by the B. B. C. Orchestra, direction Adrian Boult. Victor disc 4327, ten-inch, price \$1.00.

THE influence of jazz is apparent in the cross rhythms of Walton's *Portsmouth Point*. Rowlandson's print, upon which Walton has based his music, shows a crowded port of the 18th century, sailors embarking and disembarking, peddlers, idlers, people greeting each other and bidding farewell, etc. There is an element of coarseness in the picture and this Walton has put into his music. The overture was first produced in 1926 at the Zurich Contemporary Music Festival and was helpful in bringing wide attention to its creator.

Constant Lambert has given us the key-note to this work in his statement that Walton uses "material that can be related to Handel on the one hand and to Prokofieff on the other."

To dismiss this music as being merely amusing seems to us a patronizing attitude. Perhaps it is dated, but that does not preclude the fact that it has point — not all Portsmouth either — and an individuality of

spirit. It once heralded the arrival of a significant figure in English music; it still marks him as such. True, Walton wrote it when he was under the spell of the revolutionary movement in vogue in Europe during the early 'twenties, before he discovered that his revolt was a personal and not a universal one, but this does not destroy its interest or effectiveness. The performance here is excellently set forth and recorded. This record for more reasons than one, replaces a poorly recorded version of the overture issued by English Decca some years back.

—P. H. R.

\* \* \* \* \*

WAGNER: *Die Meistersinger, Dance of the Apprentices and Entrance of the Meistersinger*; played by the Philadelphia Orchestra, direction Eugene Ormandy. Victor disc 1807, 10 inch, price \$1.50.

THE *Dance of the Apprentices* falls between the Guild Choruses in the 2nd Scene of Act 3 and the *Entrance of the Meistersinger*. The music, as recorded here, is complete with the *Entrance of the Meistersinger*, starting on page 481 (Universal score) and continuing to the start of the chorus *Silentium* on page 491. A conventional ending is made by adding a few chords. Mr. Ormandy gives us a straightforward performance here, one free from excesses of any kind, and the recording is very fine.

—P. G.

## CONCERTOS

MILHAUD: *Concertino de Printemps (Violin and Orchestra)*; played by Yvonne Astruc and Orchestra directed by the composer. Brunswick-Polydor disc No. 95034, price \$1.50.

STRAVINSKY, *Concerto in D major (Violin and Orchestra)*; played by Samuel Dushkin and Lamoureux Concert Orchestra, direction Stravinsky. Brunswick-Polydor Set No. 1, three discs, price \$5.00.

MILHAUD has written a most attractive work in his *Concertino de Printemps*, one which breathes the spirit of spring with its melodies and its bright cadenzas. There is in this music the essence of the vernal season, warm sunlight and redolent breezes. In a note about the work read in the London broadcast in June, 1934 when the concerto was heard for the first time, the composer stated he had written this small concerto especially for

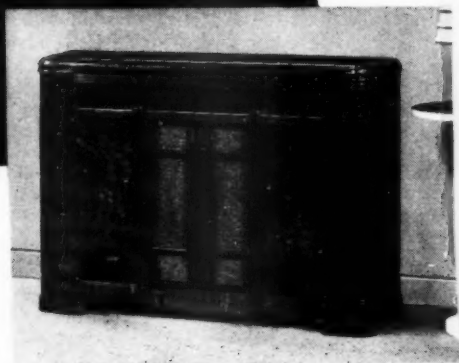
V I C T O R H I G H E R F

# Koussevitzky

## BEETHOVEN'S



RCA Victor Phonograph-Radio, the 9-U-2; combines Higher Fidelity Phonograph with automatic record changer — with Magic Brain Radio that has Magic Eye and Magic Voice, \$310. Other Phonograph-Radios from \$72.95 up. Record Players, \$16.50 up.



The  
only  
ity  
the  
reco  
mad

RCA  
every

R F I D E L I T Y R E C O R D I N G

Y conducts  
S happy  
EIGHTH

# SYMPHONY

in F Major

with the Boston Symphony Orchestra

**OTHER HIGHER - FIDELITY  
RELEASES**

BACH: *The Well-tempered Clavier*  
— *Preludes and Fugues Nos. 35*  
to 43; played by Edwin Fischer.

BACH: *Italian Concerto*, played by  
Wanda Landowska.

KREISLER: *String Quartet in A*  
*minor*, played by the Kreisler  
Quartet.

CATALONIAN MASS FOR THE  
DEAD, Choral Society of the Uni-  
versity of Pennsylvania.

The work of a supreme orchestral composer is great in the playing only as the orchestra that performs it is great. That is why the majority of music lovers the world over insist on Victor Recordings . . . for the three orchestras acknowledged to be the greatest in the world all record exclusively for Victor. This Victor Album, is a recording made to endure for a lifetime.

RCA presents the "Magic Key of RCA"  
every Sunday 2 to 3 P. M., E. S. T., on  
NBC Blue Network.

VICTOR  
  
RECORDS



RCA MANUFACTURING CO., Inc.  
Camden, N. J.

SERVICE OF THE RADIO CORPORATION OF AMERICA

Mlle. Astruc, "whose manner of playing, both purposeful and expressive, seems to me ideal for the interpretation of a musical study inspired by spring." The composer has expressed his complete satisfaction with the present recording, which is excellent.

Stravinsky's *Violin Concerto* has none of the emotional warmth of the Milhaud work. Here, we find Stravinsky writing in the later ascetic vein of his *Duo Concertant* and his *Capriccio* for Piano and Orchestra. The harmonies are more pungent here, the style more sharp. Repeated hearings assist us to adapt ourselves to his contrapuntal acerbity and harsh colorings. Dushkin plays this work with fine polish and stylistic assurance. Since Stravinsky assisted in the recording, we may assume that the whole thing is made to his complete satisfaction. The recording is both lifelike and clear.

—P. H. R.

\* \* \* \*

## CHAMBER MUSIC

BACH: *Passacaglia in C minor* (Trans. Alfred Pochon); played by the Stradivarius String Quartet. Columbia set X-72. two discs, price \$3.00.

One does not know where to begin in praise of this recording — with Bach and his musical grandeur, or with the performers, or with the fine arrangement by one of their number.

Despite the fact that Bach's *Passacaglia* is considered one of the greatest pieces in the literature of the organ, it has in recent years become more widely known and appreciated in the orchestral version of Leopold Stokowski. For some strangely unaccountable reason no up-to-date organ recording of this work exists. Bach originally wrote his *Passacaglia* for cembalo with added pedal, but later revised it for the organ, which better suits its majestic proportions. The polyphonic structure of this music is superbly realized; like a master architect Bach builds tier on tier with a brilliantly peaked finale of overpowering grandeur. The work is based on a recurring *thema fugatum* of eight bars, announced first in the bass—a tune borrowed from André Raison, a French organist in the reign of Louis XIV. Although Bach used the music of his great predecessor, Buxtehude, as a model for his *Passacaglia* his construction not only differs from the other man's in its recurring theme and its fugal finale but is of greater import.

Page 422

Pochon, second violinist of the Stradivarius String Quartet and formerly of the defunct Flonzaleys, has made a notable arrangement of the *Passacaglia* for strings. The contrapuntal structure of the work lends itself to stringed treatment, although it cannot be honestly said that a string quartet is capable of varying the tonal qualities of the music as successfully or as advantageously as an orchestra. But the strings can and do bring a spirit to the music which is particularly effective in outlining its polyphonic style. The whole thing is made to soar upward and outward until the final uplift of the thrilling finale is obtained.

The Stradivarius Quartet plays this work with fine technical finish and emotional warmth, although not always with sufficiently varying tonal gradations. This, however, is assuredly an auspicious debut for the Stradivarius Quartet on records and a valuable contribution to phonographic literature. The recording is unusually lifelike and well balanced.

—P. H. R.

\* \* \* \*

BEETHOVEN: *Quartet in C Minor, No. 4, Opus 18*, played by Lener String Quartet. Columbia.

Of all the quartets by Beethoven this, No. 4 in *C Minor*, is the only one for which preliminary sketches by the master have not been found. Any student familiar with Beethoven's method of working out his themes, creating and moulding new material out of preparatory melodies and episodes running through his head, until he veritably filled note-books with innumerable jottings, is somewhat amazed that, for this quartet, there is little or nothing extant along these lines. One can only conclude from this that Beethoven must have written the work at a single stroke, creating music at some point of white-heat inspiration; therefore, one can nod approval at Marliave's surmise that this work has no connection whatever with the other works of the same period.

Of the entire Opus 18 quartets the *C Minor* is, perhaps, one of the most brilliant, the most polished. It is, remarks Marliave, "one of the most advanced in style of Beethoven's early manner. It possesses the depth of lyrical feeling and the dramatic power of another work of contemporary date, the *Opus 13 Piano Sonata*, also written in the tonality of *C Minor*. Like that, it may be called the *Pathétique*." A conclusion that seems, on



study, too personal to accept as a fact. After all, the title *Pathétique* is an arbitrary one — and certainly indicative of little else except a catchy sobriquet. The Quartet on the whole has little pathos, and, indeed, compared with the sixth of Opus 18, has even less emotional tension.

It is the opening movement, however, that strikes the most sombre note in the whole work. Marliave feels that this movement is "charged with infinite longing and burning energy, it seems to well up from the depths of the soul in an urgent prayer for deliverance. . . ." So Beethoven once wrote:

"Alas! if I were only freed (from the curse of deafness) I could conquer the whole world. I feel indeed that my youth is only now beginning; have I not always had wretched health? And now for some time my physical strength has been improving, and with it my mental powers. Each day I feel an indescribable sense of being nearer to some end I have in view, in the realization of which alone can your Beethoven live. There is little rest for me!"

This restlessness is apparent in many sections of this beautiful work: it surges forth like some teeming river, whirlpools eddies swirling in midstream. When it touches upon some softly-uttered sentiment, some caressing phrase, then we become aware of a poet soliloquizing. . . .

The performance here is one in keeping with the peculiar characteristics of the Leners. Their playing is defined by unusual polish: very refined, very soft-spoken, very urbane. One suspects that the gentlemen are very immaculate in how they dress, very careful in how they speak, etc. And much of their urbanity emerges in their interpretation.

Such conduct is, of course, welcome in many places; in quartet playing it may have a tendency to nullify (especially in the music of Beethoven) a certain well-ordered and natural gruffness. For Beethoven was never the suave gentleman — even when writing poetry. On the other hand, he was not the intolerable boor, as many players and writers make him out to be. A balance between the two — which makes him of course quite human — seems to me to be the best evocation of Ludwig's musical personality.

—W. K.



# Brunswick POLYDOR

## FEATURE ARTISTS

### WILHELM KEMPF

BEETHOVEN: Sonata No. 29, in B Flat Major, Op. 106 (Hammerklavier) — Set BP-4.

BACH: French Suite No. 5 in G Major (95040).

### ALBERT WOLFF

ROUSSEL: Symphony No. 3 in G Minor, Op. 42, Lamoureux Symphony Orchestra — Set BP-3.

CHARPENTIER: Impressions d'Italie - Suite A Mules; Napoli; Lamoureux Orchestra. (95041 - 95042).

### FURTWAENGLER

WEBER: Der Freischutz — Overture, Intermezzo to Act 3. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra — (95030 - 95031).

ROSSINI: Barber of Seville — Overture. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra (95057).

### TIANA LEMNITZ

WEBER: Der Freischutz  
Act 2, Scene 2: Wie Nahte mir der Schlummer  
Act 3, Scene 2: Und ob die Wolke sie verhuellt  
Berlin State Opera Orchestra (95032).

R. STRAUSS: Der Rosenkavalier, Act 3 Trio and Act 3 duet, with assisting artists— (95033).

Manufactured by

**BRUNSWICK RECORD**  
CORPORATION  
NEW YORK, N. Y.

KREISLER: *String Quartet in A minor* (7 sides), and *Scherzo a la Dittersdorf*; played by Kreisler String Quartet. Victor set M-335, four discs, price \$8.00.

KREISLER wrote this work in 1921. Cobbett calls it "a personal confession after the model of Smetana's *Aus meinen Leben Quartet*." We take it that Cobbett finds its Viennese implications a confession on Kreisler's part that the environmental influence of his early life in Vienna is inseparable from his musical creation. The work is more unconventional than Smetana's and considerably less difficult to perform. Its chief charm is its naivete, and from this is derived the pleasure that musicians have in playing it and audiences in hearing it.

*The Friends of Recorded Music* at its inception had planned to record this work, but upon learning from Mr. Kreisler, when he arrived in America this past season, that he had just completed a recording of it in England, the plan was dropped. Mention of this is made here to show the wide endorsement of musicians of the work, which although it does not attain any profundity of expression, nevertheless owns a particularly ingratiating charm which is widely admired.

Shortly after the work was played in public for the first time, the enterprising English Vocalion Company brought forth an excised version (a common custom in those days) of this quartet on records. Those records, along with many other unusual selections, have long been in the discard. Why it took fifteen years for the quartet to materialize in a first rate recording, however, is one of those unexplainable things. Surely, Kreisler's popularity as a violinist and a composer should have been reason enough for its reproduction on records. Who, we frequently wonder, decides these things? It is not that the quartet ranks with the great works of its kind, but that it occupies a unique place in chamber music. The style is distinctly Kreisler's, and that style is facile and ingratiating, a distinctly musical one, combining delicate charm with a cosmopolitan warmth and sentiment.

There is nothing difficult about this music either in form or spirit, so the listener can approach it with assurance that he will comprehend it from the beginning. Its style is individual both in form and content. The first of its four movements is termed *Fantasia*. The ebb and flow of this music is nicely cal-

culated. The sentiment here is warmly passionate, but slightly tinged with melancholy. The *Scherzo*, which follows, has a wit and delicacy that is essentially Kreisler's. Call this salon music if you will, but can you deny its effectiveness and its charming ingenuity? The third movement, entitled *Preamble and Romance*, is full of a warm sentiment. The *Romance* itself, marked *Andante con moto*, is graciously melodic but free from sentimental pathos. It has been published also in an arrangement for violin and piano. The finale is particularly delightful. Kreisler has marked the opening with the subcaption *schalkhaft* (roguish). The body of the movement is a Czech polka, but there are clever returns to the spirit of the opening.

The quartet that plays this work was assembled by Kreisler in England. It is made up of Kreisler (first violin), Petrie, formerly of the London String Quartet (second violin), Primrose, one of the foremost living violists, and Kennedy (cello). Kreisler has drawn together four excellent musicians, and the results he has attained with them make one wish that the quartet with its imposing name were a permanent one, for the performance is finely coordinated. The recording here is fully satisfying.

—P. H. R.

## PIANO

BACH: *Preludes and Fugues, Nos. 35 to 43, from the Well Tempered Clavier*; played by Edwin Fischer. Victor set M-334, price \$14.00.

VICTOR'S recent policy of bringing out on their regular lists sets produced by the various subscription societies in England is here continued with the latest album of *Preludes and fugues*. This album brings us within five of the end of the *Well Tempered Clavier*. As in the previous issues of the "Bach 48 Society," the artist is the distinguished Swiss pianist, Edwin Fischer, who holds an enviable reputation for his playing of Bach.

While there can be no question either of the sincerity or the ability and musicianship of the pianist, those who are not familiar with Fischer's Bach style may find in this set some cause for disappointment or surprise. The keynote of his playing is restraint. Rarely does he rise above a *forte*; and assuredly his playing of the *G sharp minor Fugue* (No. 42) must be some of the very softest ever re-

corded. This is in itself rather a virtue than a fault not only because it renders the louder passages more effective by contrast, but also because a *fortissimo* from a modern grand piano is scarcely in keeping with music conceived for the fragile clavichord tone. However, this virtue does result in some loss of clarity; and there are a number of places where the bass line is completely lost. This may be in part, at least, due to the recording, which is on the brittle side, and at its best in the medium dynamics.

For the most part Fischer is scrupulously faithful to the text, though in the fortieth *Prelude* (*G minor*) he doubles the bass, in a very successful attempt to give the music greater weight, dignity and impressiveness. I personally cannot agree with all his *accelerandi*, *rallentandi* and other variations in *tempo*. Remembering the superb "joie de jouer" of the late Harold Samuel, and the ease with which he crowded his effects into the firm structure of the rhythmic pulse, I feel a little sad that Fischer, who comes so near to some of the same effects, does not quite manage to do likewise.

All of which sounds like condemnation, which it is not intended to be. When these things have been said there remains plenty to admire in Fischer's playing. There is a roguishness about the thirty-sixth *Fugue*, in *F minor*, which is hard to resist, and a real expansiveness in the *F sharp major Prelude* which follows it. The *F sharp minor Prelude* (No. 38) has stateliness and sweep, as has also the aforementioned fortieth *Prelude*, while the fortieth *Fugue* is disarmingly genial. These things and more will please the sensitive hearer. Furthermore, speaking quite practically, it seems very unlikely that any other pianist will attempt, in the near future, the complete recording of the *Well Tempered Clavier*, and unless this is done, the present set and its companions will remain the standard. And even if the work were to be done again, few living pianists would come through the ordeal as well as Fischer has.

—P. M.

**WILHELM FRIEDEMANN BACH:** *Sonata in C major* (*Falck No. 1*)—*Allegro; Grave; Vivace*; played by Ernst Victor Wolff. Musicraft disc, No. 1011, price \$1.50.

**THIS** disc is interesting from three points of view. First, it introduces to the phonograph the erratic but very gifted son of the

great Johann Sebastian Bach, Wilhelm Friedemann; second, it presents an early example of the piano sonata; third, it brings us the playing of Ernst Victor Wolff.

This artist arrived in this country at about the same time as the other Ernst Wolff, and when the first Columbia recordings of the baritone made their appearance, there were a number of critics who confused the two. Ernst Victor Wolff long enjoyed a fine reputation in Berlin, and is fast establishing himself here. He has appeared in solo recital as well as in connection with other artists in New York, playing both piano and harpsichord, and has been heard on a very successful series of radio broadcasts.

The *Sonata* has vitality and charm, if not great profundity. Dr. Wolff plays it like the fine stylist he is, not as old and dried curio, but as music to be enjoyed. The recording is crystal clear, though the piano tune has some of that wiriness so familiar in reproductions of this instrument. The surface noise is less obtrusive on this than on earlier Musicraft discs, and in every way the record is an advance.

—P. M.

MUSICRAFT



PRESENTS:

### First Recorded Performances

**BUXTEHUDE:** *Easter Cantata* — "O Froehliche Stunden", Ethel Luening, soprano; J. Reilich and R. Hersh, violins; Sterling Hunkins, cello; Ernst Victor Wolff, harpsichord.

**HANDEL:** *Secular Cantata* — "Nell Dolce Dell' Oblio", Ethel Luening, soprano; Otto Luening, flute; Sterling Hunkins, cello; Ernst Victor Wolff, harpsichord.

**W. F. BACH:** *Sonata in C Major*.

**C. P. E. BACH:** *Sonata in G major*.  
Both by Ernst Victor Wolff, piano.

**J. C. F. BACH:** *String Quartet No. 1 in E flat major*.

The Perole String Quartet

Each on one twelve inch record ..... \$1.50

**MUSICRAFT RECORDS, Inc.**

10 WEST 47th STREET - NEW YORK CITY

BEETHOVEN: Piano Sonata in E minor, Opus 90; played by Egon Petri. Columbia set X-71, two discs, price \$3.00.

**E**GO PETRI, the distinguished pianist, again steps forth in an admirable re-recording of one of Beethoven's most magnificent piano sonatas. His playing is superb and full of feeling, and he has captured fully the spirit and sturdiness of the master's mood.

This *Sonata* is one of Beethoven's most polyphonic works, full of nobility and strength. Speaking especially of the *Rondo*, the late Paul Bekker writes that "the whole is based upon a straightforward, deeply spiritual song-melody, repeated again and again like a strophe, thrown into high relief by curious episodes, and contrasted effects, till it completes a circle and returns to the beginning once more. It is one of the most artistically expert movements Beethoven ever wrote. Certain passages . . . point to the last quartets."

The *Sonata, Opus 90*, consists of but two movements, foreshadowing already the experimental style of the later Beethoven. But the two movements are in no sense restricted or circumscribed. It seems to burst through the trammels of the sonata form.

Much can be said regarding this work, but words would be superfluous. Suffice it to say, that *Opus 90* is a necessary item to which one can listen with gratification. The recording, like the playing is of high pressure.

—W. K.

\* \* \* \*

BEETHOVEN: *Sonata in B flat major, Opus 106 (Hammerklavier)*; played by Wilhelm Kempff. Brunswick-Polydor set No. 4, five discs, price \$7.50.

**L**ong familiarity with Weingartner's orchestral version of the *Hammerklavier Sonata* may prevent some phonophiles' immediate appreciation of a recorded piano rendition of this great, yet controversial work for piano. For the deeply poetic and rarely consolatory second movement is most gratifyingly explored by the orchestra, and the difficult fugue in the finale is assuredly articulated in a most brilliant and satisfying manner.

But since Beethoven wrote this sonata for the piano, and not for the orchestra, a recorded version of the work in its original form is of prime importance.

Kempff has proven himself a fine exponent of Beethoven's sonatas in his long list of Polydor recordings. His readings are distinguished for their technical assurance and emotional warmth, their clear articulation and practical virtuosity. Kempff is a pedagogue as well as a performer, and this we recognize in his playing.

His performance of the *Hammerklavier* is remarkable for its clarity and its fluency. The work, a severely taxing and exhausting one, is played by him with dignity and appropriate energy.

Since Schnabel as well as Kempff has recorded this sonata, comparisons between the two versions may be of interest to our readers. In the first place, let me state that Kempff has the benefit of better and truer piano recording, and fewer record sides; besides his set is practically half the price of the other. Schnabel with his usual propensity for extension takes 12 sides against Kempff's 10. The great length of the work and its demand for concentration on the listener's part is not alleviated by extra spacing. Schnabel is more dramatic in the first movement, but the bigness and deep sonorities of the music are excellently conveyed by Kempff without undue physical exertion, and the whole is better attested by the finer recording he has received. Under Kempff's hands the *Scherzo* fares better, being more fluent. Schnabel's rendition of the great slow movement, on the other hand, is more revelatory, more inspired. He finds a spiritual implication in the music that the other man misses. It is therefore most unfortunate that his recording is not on a par with that of Kempff's both in its quality and its spacing. I am inclined to find honors equally divided in the last movement. Schnabel's virtuosity is undoubtedly more compelling here in more than one passage, but it has that aura of self-satisfaction about it that it has so often irritated me in his playing.

I recommend the use of a chromium needle to get the best results on Kempff's recording in a first playing; after that Shadow-graph steel or BCN needles will operate more satisfactorily.

—P. H. R.

LISZT: *Sonetto del Petrarca* No. 123; and *Feux follets*; played by Anatole Kitain. Columbia disc, No. 68780-D, price \$1.50.

**T**HIS disc is a sort of hangover from the Liszt semi-centennial. It presents two selections new to the American catalogues, one of which has never been recorded before.

The *Sonetto del Petrarca* has a rather peculiar history. It is one of three pieces founded on the sonnets of the Italian poet and is No. 6 of the second book of *Années de pèlerinage*. Originally published in 1838, this Sonnet appeared as a song in 1847, and was finally republished in a revised piano version in 1858. It is more than a mere attempt to render the atmosphere and meaning of Petrarch's poetry into music, for there is little essential difference between the vocal and piano arrangements. The words of the poem fit perfectly the melodic line as we have it here, which would seem to prove that Liszt actually conceived the music originally for the voice. This *Sonnet* is an example of that blend of the mediaeval and the romantic of which Liszt was so fond, and which is perhaps most familiar to us in his song *O quand je dors*. Petrarch's *Sonnet* No. 123 is the one beginning "I vidi in terra angelica costumi," and describes the raptures of a lady's tears and sighs — so sweet that the very winds pause to listen. The principal melody of Liszt's music is a haunting one, full of "linked sweetness long drawn out."

*Feux follets* (will o' the wisps) is No. 5 of the *Etudes d'exécution transcendante*. Like all of the *Etudes* of Liszt, it is a study in a double sense — for the pianist in overcoming its enormous difficulties, and for the listener in discovering the artist's technical capabilities. The picturesque title merely shows again Liszt's need for some sort of program, and gives the artist something to aim at in the way of tone coloring.

Anatole Kitain is a Russian who first became known as the winner of the Liszt prize in the international contest held in May, 1933, in Budapest. The following year he appeared successfully in recital in New York. How profound his musicianship may be this disc does not give us an opportunity to judge, but it establishes him at once as the possessor of an elaborate technique, a feeling for the Liszt tradition and a good singing tone. After the few preliminary fuzzy playings the recording will be found to be excellent.

—P. M.

SCHUMANN: *Toccata in C major*, Op. 7; and CHOPIN: *Mazurka in F sharp minor*, Op. 59, No. 3; played by Simon Barer. Victor disc, No. 14263, price \$2.00.

**A** new release of the Schumann *Toccata* is, on the face of it, surprising, for Victor already has a listing of the work among the recordings of Josef Lhevinne. Our amazement, however, does not outlast a hearing of this new version, for in the hands of Simon Barer the work takes on a quite different aspect. This is definitely virtuoso music — one of the rare instances when Schumann put all at the mercy (and the ability) of the performer. At the time of its composition the *Toccata* must have been well-nigh unplayable. It still needs all the pianist has of dash and brilliance — qualities by no means missing in the playing of Simon Barer. After listening to this recording the slower, smoother and steadier playing of Lhevinne sounds tame indeed, though the older disc has a greater degree of polish. An idea of the difference in tempo will be given by the fact that Lhevinne required a side and a half for his performance, while Barer gets his easily on one side.



### Non-Metallic PHONOGRAPH NEEDLES

B. C. N.'s reproduce true, exquisite tones and do not hiss, scratch, or injure fine records.

#### RADIO PICK - UP

A Needle for Electric Pick-ups, perfect reproduction assured.

#### EMERALD

FULL TONE Needle . . . for Electric Pick-ups and for use with Record-changing combination.

Package of 12 — 75c  
Package of 6 — 45c

B.C.N.'s own Needle Sharpener obtains extra mileage from B.C.N. needles.....\$1.50

From any good Music Dealer or from  
Sole Agent for U.S.A.

Read & Harding - 989 Sixth Ave., N. Y. C.



I for one am glad to welcome a different coupling on the new disc, as the Schumann-Liszt *Fruchlingsnacht*, which filled the left-over grooves of the Lhevinne record, represents the transcriber at his very worst, and must be offensive to every lover of Schumann's songs.

The *Mazurka in F sharp minor, Op. 59, No. 3*, is one of Chopin's most attractive works in this form. "Chopin at the summit of his invention!" cries Huneker. "Time and tune that seldom wait for man are here his bondslaves. Pathos, delicacy, boldness, a measured melancholy and the art of a euphonious presentation of all these qualities, with many other factors, stamp this particular *Mazurka* a masterpiece." One could hardly ask for a greater contrast than this provides with the Schumann *Toccata*. Here are poetry and grace, fully realized by the pianist. He plays with the genuine *rubato* characteristic of the best Chopin tradition, and sustains his moods with mastery and conviction. The reproduction, as in all the Barer records, ranks with the very best in clarity and approach to the true piano tone.

—P. M.

\* \* \* \* \*

SCHUBERT: *Moment Musical in F Minor*; and BRAHMS: *Intermezzo in C Major* (Op. 119, No. 3), and CHOPIN: *Waltz in D Flat*, and *Prelude in F*, played by Walter Gieseking. Columbia disc 17079, 10 inch, price \$1.00.

GIESEKING provides a miniature recital of four selections on one small record. Each number is an established favorite, and the pianist eschews novelty in his playing. He lends his delicacy and his digital neatness to everything. His cavalier treatment makes for a feeling of cool detachment. This frostiness leaves the Brahms *Intermezzo* incompletely realized, but it suits well enough this particular pair of Chopin numbers. It is a relief to hear, for once, the *Moment Musical* treated in an adult manner. Your reaction to this record will depend on what degree of warmth you want along with superlatively smooth pianism. —A. P. D.

## INSTRUMENTAL

FAURE: *Impromptu for harp, Op. 36*; played by Lily Laskine. Victor disc, No. 12005, price \$1.50.

THE domestic release of this much-admired disc, which incidentally was due to the ef-

forts of *The American Music Lover*, should occasion loud hosannas not only from students of the harp and Fauré enthusiasts, but from all collectors of the unusual. Let me say at the outset that it is easily the best harp recording I have ever heard — from every standpoint a special. In the first place the *Impromptu* is outstanding music — I know of no other harp composition to compare with it — and in the second it is thoroughly idiomatic and well conceived for the instrument. Furthermore, as playing and as reproduction I have not heard the equal of this record. Let those who tremble at the idea of two twelve-inch record sides given over to a single work for harp hear and be convinced.

The *Impromptu pour harpe* was written in 1904, and in 1913 Fauré reworked it as number six of his piano *impromptus*. So perfect is its structure in its original form, however, that he made practically no changes except those necessitated by the different technique of the piano. As we have it here the work is expansive and full, and though it calls on all the tricks and graces of the harp, they do not detract a jot from its bigness and impressiveness. The result is music from start to finish. Cortot feels that the work is misnamed, and that *Fantasia or Ballade* would have suited it better. However this may be the name does not detract from the power and beauty of the music.

Mme. Laskine is in complete sympathy with the composer, and she plays with great surety and understanding. Let me repeat that everyone interested in music should at least investigate this record.

—P. M.

\* \* \* \* \*

BACH: *Italian Concerto* (3 parts), and *Three Little Preludes in C major* and *Fugue in C minor*; played by Wanda Landowska on the harpsichord. Victor discs 14232-33, price \$4.00.

SCHWEITZER, the eminent Bachian, speaking for the harpsichord no less than twenty-five years ago, stated "the charm of its sparkling and rustling tone is not so easily resisted, and the variety of tone that it permits, by means of change of keyboards, coupling, uncoupling, and octave coupling, almost makes us forget that no nuance of tone is possible on it . . . . Anyone who has heard Frau Wanda Landowska play the *Italian Concerto* on her wonderful Pleyel finds it hard to understand how it could ever

"be played on a modern piano." This was a quarter of a century ago, and only today we have Landowska's superb performance recorded. Those in charge of phonograph performances have never been too far-sighted; too many dollar signs have intervened.

The brilliancy of Landowska's harpsichord is particularly suited to the *Italian Concerto*, and under her agile fingers its virtuoso qualities are excellently set forth. It is not alone the sparkle of the music which Landowska attests but its rhythmic pulse, and it is in her greater linear resiliency that she supercedes others in the playing of this work.

The recording here is more vital than any we have heard on discs by Landowska to date, in fact it has the brilliancy and brightness of the Pessl recordings, which have done so much toward popularizing harpsichord records. We have noticed that in England this recording was criticized for over-amplification, and an assertion that the instrument was too close to the microphone was made, an opinion which we believe must have been derived from hearing these records on an old machine rather than on an up-to-date higher-fidelity outfit. In the latter type of reproduction, we found the recording unusually lifelike and particularly enjoyable.

Landowska gives us several preludes for beginners, as Bach termed them, Nos. 1, 2 and 3 from his *Twelve Little Preludes*, with an added fugue, all written as teaching pieces for his sons and pupils. The charm of this music is irrefutable as Landowska plays it. As a filler-in, these preludes are small fare after Kirkpatrick's recent contribution of the imposing *C minor Fugue* from *The Musical Offering* as the filler-in on his recording of the *Italian Concerto*. In fact, this latter contribution is an important one in our estimation to the phonograph. But when it comes to a wholly satisfying performance of the *Italian Concerto*, it is to Landowska that we will turn.

—P. H. R.

\* \* \* \* \*

FRANCK: *Andante* from the *Grand Piece Symphonique*; and SCHUMANN: *Abendlied*; played on the organ by Charles M. Courboin. Victor 14279, price \$2.00.

COURBOIN, the eminent Belgian organist, well known from his innumerable concert and radio recitals, uses the famous organ of the Philadelphia Wanamaker store for these recordings. The slow movement of the Franck

## COLUMBIA

— Releases —

### SET No. 290

DELIUS: *Society Set* — Volume II.

SEA-DRIFT (For Baritone Solo, Chorus and Orchestra)

INTERMEZZO FROM "FENNIMORE AND GERDA"

OVER THE HILLS AND FAR AWAY and IN A SUMMER GARDEN.

Sir Thomas Beecham and the London Philharmonic Orch. John Brownlee (baritone) and the London Select Choir

### SET No. 289

MUZIO: *SONG RECITAL* — (Ten Songs sung in French Italian and Latin). Claudia Muzio (Soprano) with Symphony Orchestra. (Songs by Donaudy, Reger, Debussy, Delibes Pergolesi, L. Refice, and Bainbridge Crist.)

### SET No. X72

BACH: *PASSACAGLIA IN C MINOR* (Quartet Version by Pochon). Stradivarius String Quartet (Wolfsohn Pochon, Dick and d'Archambeau).

### SET No. X71

BEETHOVEN: *SONATA No. 27, in E Minor, Op. 90.* Egon Petri (pianist).

### ACCLAIMED BY CRITICS

### SET No. 285

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 3, in E Flat, Op. 55.* Felix Weingartner and the VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCH.

WAGNER: *Die Meistersinger* — *Overture.* Sir Thomas Beecham and the London Philharmonic Orchestra. No 68854-D.

~



COLUMBIA  
Phonograph Co., Inc.  
New York City



work is contemplative, but not diffuse. music. Courboin plays it with a fine sense of delicate color adjustment, in which the sweet organ strings predominate.

Schumann wrote several night pieces, but the one Courboin has transcribed is the *Abendlied* from the group of *Twelve Four-Hand Pieces, Op. 85*. This, like the Franck, is subdued music, played with strings and soft solo stops, with one good organ crescendo.

The organ tone is not distorted in the recording, but it does sound distant and at times not altogether clear. The surface noise, rare in Victor, competes noticeably with the soft music on both sides of the disc.

—A. P. D.

\* \* \* \*

BRAHMS: *Hungarian Dance No. 1* (arr. Joachim); DEBUSSY: *La fill aux cheveux de lin*; played by Grisha Goluboff, with piano accompaniment by Ivor Newton. Columbia ten-inch disc. No. 17078-D, price \$1.00.

GRISHA GOLUBOFF, violinist from San Francisco, made his debut with the National Symphony Orchestra in New York as long ago as November, 1931, but has waited till he reached the advanced age of fourteen before making his first record. Meantime he has toured extensively, and enjoyed the friendship of Henry Ford, who gave the boy a fine Strad and a gold headed bow. This recording was made in England.

The music which the young Grisha, or his sponsors, chose for his phonographic debut is in no way startling. Neither selection belongs properly to the violin repertoire, but both are favorites with violinists and have been recorded many times by maturer talents than that of Master Goluboff. The disc is interesting, then, chiefly as a demonstration of what a lad can do with the music.

Comparison with another Californian prodigy are inevitable. Be it said that Goluboff commands a fuller and richer tone than Menuhin at fourteen, but Menuhin from the beginning of his career had a musical insight which is not hinted at in this record. The Brahms is done with the requisite technical equipment and dash; but in the Debussy Goluboff can hardly be said to capture the naive gentleness of the Scottish maiden of *Leconte de Lisle's* poem from which Debussy took his title. The tone is large and lush, and the tempo a bit too slow and deliberate. The dependable Ivor Newton is at the piano, and the recording is first-rate.

—P. M.

## VOCAL

MISSA PRO DEFUNCTIS: *Introit; Gradual and Sanctus; Communion; Libera me and Kyrie eleison*; sung by the Choral Society of the University of Pennsylvania, direction of Harl McDonald. Two Victor discs, Nos. 14277-8, price \$4.00.

THIS anonymous *Requiem mass* takes its place unquestionably among the most interesting releases in many months. Though the labels maintain absolute silence as to the origin of the work, this omission is set right by a folder which accompanies the discs — a new departure for records issued without albums.

Owing to recent events, this folder, written by the conductor of the chorus. Dr. Harl McDonald, makes melancholy reading. After a sketch of the historical and musical background of the famous Benedictine monastery of Montserrat, near Barcelona, Dr. McDonald explains that this *Requiem* is one of the priceless treasures which rested for so long in the archives there. Fortunately, after the Spanish revolution of 1931, the government decided to allow these works to be made available to certain libraries, and the University of Pennsylvania was among the institutions to take advantage of the opportunity. The present *Mass*, originally for a chorus of boys and men, has been arranged, presumably by Dr. McDonald, for mixed choir. It has been dated about the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century.

There is a simple and haunting dignity about the Latin of the church liturgy which makes it susceptible to a seemingly infinite number and variety of musical settings. This appears to be particularly true of the *Requiem mass*. From the sublime impersonality of the Gregorian chant to the dramatic utterances of Mozart and Verdi, the beauty of the old text remains unfaded. The present work falls, with those of Palestrina, Victoria, Vecchi and others of the polyphonic period, somewhere about midway between the two extremes, having a directness of expression which allies it to the plainsong from which some of its thematic material sprang, but at the same time a richness and massive dignity, which, though it never approaches the theatrical, is far warmer and more intimately expressive than Gregorian chant. "Several well-known musical critics of America," the leaflet tells us, "who have heard the complete

work, have pronounced it a discovery of first rank importance in the field of choral music."

From the phraseology of this statement I am prompted to wonder if this recorded performance is not an abridged one. The question is further aggravated by the unusual order of the section of the *Mass*. That only a part of the text is present proves nothing, as there is a certain amount of latitude in the setting of the liturgy; but surely the *Sanctus* does not normally follow the *Gradual* as it does in this recording, nor does a *Requiem* usually end with the *Kyrie*. These things might have been so arranged for purposes of effect, or to fit the various sections neatly onto the records' four sides; but in any case we should have been told about it in the otherwise excellent booklet. If, on the other hand, more of the *Mass* exists, we can only regret that it was not recorded complete.

The University of Pennsylvania Choral Society, to refer once more to the leaflet, numbers 200 young members, and they have the advantage of rich experience as choral adjunct to the Philadelphia Orchestra. Under the able direction of Dr. McDonald, they sing this music for us with fine musical feeling and spirit. It is true that the male section is inclined to predominate, and that there are moments of unsteadiness in the sopranos, but these things are compensated for by the enthusiasm which is so plainly evident. I am a little bothered by the familiar words pronounced as we were taught in school, rather than according to the established church usage, but there are not very many points on these discs where this is noticeable. The recording is as broad and sonorous as the music itself.

—P. M.

\* \* \* \*

A SONG RECITAL (Ten songs); sung by Claudia Muzio, soprano, with orchestra. PERGOLESI: *Se tu m'ami*; DONAUDY: *O del mio amato ben*, disc 9112-M; REFICE: *Umbra di nube* and *Ave Maria*, disc 9113-M; DELIBES: *Les filles de Cadix*; CRIST: *C'est mon ami*, disc 9114-M; DEBUSSY: *Beau soir*; DELIBES: *Bonjour, Suzon*, disc 4136-M; DONAUDY: *Spirate pur, spirate*; REGER: *La ninna nanna della vergine*, disc 4135-M. Columbia set No. 289, three 12 inch and two 10 inch discs, price \$6.50.

**L**AST spring, shortly after the news of the passing of Claudia Muzio reached these

shores, Columbia brought out a memorial album of operatic arias made about a year earlier. Since that time a number of single discs have appeared, and now the offering is crowned by this set of ten non-operatic selections.

As Mr. Reed points out in the booklet which accompanies the set, few singers achieve equal success in the opera and on the concert platform, because of the wide difference in the approach to the aria and to the song. This is particularly true of the Italian, who are a race of opera singers, and whose language does not possess a heritage of song to be compared with the German or the French.

Mme. Muzio possessed one of the indisputably great voices of our time. She was not a subtle singer — few Italians are — but she was an intelligent and tasteful one, and her art grew with the years, even to the time of her death. Her operatic singing occasionally suffered from that overripe emotionalism so dear to the hearts of her countrymen, but this blemish is not present in this set of songs. On the other hand, we may miss here not only the bigness and sweep which characterized Muzio in opera, but at the same time the intimacy which marks the work of the greatest song singers. This latter lack is emphasized by the use of the orchestra for the accompaniments, though it cannot truthfully be said that most of these particular songs are damaged by the orchestration.

All the selections are well suited to Mme. Muzio's art and style. Perhaps the most sheerly lovely work in the album is done in the Donaudy songs, for though she may alter some of the notes, the tone is so exquisite, and the melodic line so pure, that one is content to accept this as the real memorial to this great artist. The Refice songs are more or less typical post-*Otello* Italian music, but pleasantly unfamiliar, and, since they were composed for her, absolutely adapted to her voice. The Pergolesi *Arietta* is well done enough to make one wish for more songs of that period. The French songs are less satisfying because of her Italianate pronunciation, though they, too, are artistically done. The best, to my mind, is the Crist *C'est mon ami*, a simple setting of the Florian poem so familiar in Godard's music. The Reger *Maria Wiegenlied*, translated into Italian, is likewise beautifully sung, though the text sounds strange, and the addition of the orchestral introduction and interlude hardly adds to the beauty of the song.

The orchestra, under the direction of Cav. Molajoli in all but the Refice selections, which the composer directs himself, is a good one and the recording is of the very best.

—P. M.

\* \* \*  
BELLINI: *Norma, Casta Diva*; and  
PONCHIELLI: *La Gioconda, Suicidio*;  
sung by Gina Cigna, with orchestra.  
Columbia 9127-M, price \$1.50.

**M**ME. Cigna's second American record has arias that are of widely different type, but she fails to differentiate their styles sufficiently. She does not rise to the loftiness of feeling and the flowing breadth of line that the *Casta Diva* needs. The unnamed orchestra is equally unperceptive. *Suicidio* better suits their stride. The singer vigorously employs her large soprano, which is very chesty in the lower tones, and powerful, even piercing, at the top. Almost any singer, given such a voice, might do as much with it.

There is a displeasing uncertainty in the recording.

—A. P. D.

\* \* \*  
BIZET: *Carmen, Flower Song*; and MEYER-BEER: *Africana, O Paradiso*; sung by Enrico Caruso, with an electrically recorded orchestra. Victor 14234, price \$2.

**T**HIS re-make of Caruso arias is mechanically interesting. The voice is not quite as natural as on the original record, and in one place it is muffled where it rang out on the old disc. Of course the balance between voice and orchestra is nearer to present recording standards. The orchestra, playing alone, is brilliant, but it is less realistic when the voice, along with the old surface scratch, is added.

Caruso's Italian version of the *Carmen* aria is the one here reproduced.

—A. P. D.

\* \* \*  
BUXTEHUDE: *Cantata No. 12—O froehliche Stunden*; performed by Ethel Luening, soprano, Joseph Reilich, violin, Ralph Hersh, violin. Sterling Hunkins, cello and Ernst Victor Wolff, harpsichord.

HANDEL: *Nell dolce dell' oblio*; performed by Ethel Luening, Otto Luening, flute, Sterling Hunkins and Ernst Victor Wolff. Two Musicraft discs, Nos. 1009-1010, price \$1.50 each.

**T**HIS month Musicraft shows a very definite advance over the previous releases of its brief career. Not only are this month's

publications better as recordings than those we have had before, but they present music which is farther from the beaten track, and hence even more in keeping with the avowed aims of the organization.

On these two records we have excitingly novel material. First in importance is the cantata of Buxtehude, who has up to now been treated rather unsatisfactorily on records. This is the first vocal composition of Bach's great predecessor and teacher to reach the wax, and it whets the appetite for more. There is no need to go into detail about the music, which is quite able to speak eloquently for itself. For the performance Musicraft has assembled an excellent group of musicians. Mrs. Luening, it will be remembered, appeared on one of the New Music Quarterly Recordings, in compositions of her husband and Aaron Copland. Here, in a far different field, she is at her best, using her light and bright soprano with taste and agility, and exhibiting an enthusiasm altogether rare. This gusto is shared by the Messrs. Reilich, Hersh, Hunkins and Wolff. Aside from a slight stridency in the violins, there is little to criticise in the recording.

Handel's *Nell dolce dell' oblio* is the first of his secular cantatas to appear on records. This time Otto Luening, as flautist, joins forces with his wife, Mr. Hunkins and Mr. Wolff. The music is not as irresistible as the Buxtehude and the performance, though satisfactory, has not quite the same *eclat*. The slight quaver in Mrs. Luening's voice is here more in evidence, but it is hardly enough to detract from a fine bit of singing. The assisting artists are all good.

—P. M.

\* \* \*  
MOZART: *Die Entfuehrung aus dem Serail, Ach, Ich Liebte, and Martern Aller Arten*; sung by Margherita Perras, with the Berlin State Opera Orchestra, conducted by Bruno Seidler-Winkler. Victor 12007, price \$1.50.

**A** singer who can so competently toss off these two fiendishly difficult *Seraglio* arias can afford to rest temporarily on her laurels; she will never have a bigger task set out for her. Mme. Perras gives an impressively good, if not a thrilling, performance. The voice has an agreeable quality throughout its very wide range. It gains its dramatic effect by clarity and carefully placed accent although it does not seem to have any great volume or remarkable brilliance. The *coloratura* is despatched with



commendable facility. Mme. Perras gives promise of being an important phonograph artist.

The voice and orchestra are excellently recorded.

—A. P. D.

\* \* \* \* \*

ROMBERG: *Will You Remember* from *Maytime*, and *Farewell to Dreams*, sung by Jeannette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy. Victor disc No. 4329, 10 inch, price \$1.00.

**J**EANNETTE MacDonald remains the best of all the prima donnas who are heard on the screen. And Nelson Eddy, despite the fact that he makes love like an automaton in his pictures, sings, as the girls say, 'divinely'. This record was made in Hollywood in connection with the recent filming of *Maytime*. If you like the selections and you enjoy the artistry of these two fine singers, you will want this record. It is brilliantly recorded.

—P. G.

\* \* \* \* \*

SCHUMANN, CLARA: *Liebst Du um Schoenheit*, and *Ich Stand in Dunklen Traeumen*; and SCHUMANN, ROBERT: *Zigeunerliedchen*, and *Fruelings Ankunft*; sung by Ernst Wolff, playing his own accompaniments. Columbia 9126-M, price \$1.50.

**E**RNST WOLFF does not follow the beaten track when he seeks out material to record. This time he finds two songs written by Clara Schumann, and two of her husband's that are little known.

The Schumanns wrote a set of twelve songs to poems from F. Ruckert's *Liebesfruehling*. The fourth of these is *Liebst Du um Schoenheit*, and was composed by the wife, although it is also published as Opus 37, No. 4 in Robert's works. The lyric runs: "If you are in love with Beauty, then love the sun, with its brightness; if you love Youth, then choose the spring, that is young every year; if you love treasures, then take the siren, who has fine pearls; but if you love Love, then love me as I love you." Frau Schumann's setting is neat, but shows no marked personal style. Her *Ich Stand in Dunklen Traeumen* uses the Heine poem for which Schubert wrote such infinitely tenderer music in his song *Ihr Bild*.

The two Robert Schumann songs are from his Op. 79, *Album fuer die Jugend*. The *Zigeunerliedchen*, called No. 7 on the label, but No. 8 in the Peters edition, is a

morning waking-up song. The music is a simple three verse ballad. *Fruelings Ankunft* is not one of Schumann's better songs; the music does not quite catch the enthusiasm of the words that tell of the freshness of spring that banishes winter's cares, and bids the heart to be happy and bold.

Ernst Wolff sings and plays the accompaniments in his accustomed proficient manner. His diction is a model of distinctness.

—A. P. D.

\* \* \* \* \*

VIUT VITRE, *Ukrainian Folk Song*; and GORIN: *Molitva (The Prayer)*; sung by Igor Gorin, baritone. Victor disc 4328, 10-inch, price \$1.00.

**H**ERE is an artist who has almost everything, looks, youth, musicianship, and one of the most remarkable baritone voices of our day. To say that he recalls Chaliapine in his younger days is not to bestow excessive praise, for Gorin interprets and sings a song in the thrillingly communicative manner of the great basso.

The first song, conceived in the traditional manner of many Russian folk songs, has an opening slow section, nostalgic and expressively fervent, and a second section gay and abandoned in a dance rhythm. What is it all about? We do not know the words, but Gorin renders it so effectively that we are not greatly concerned with its verbal implications.

In *Molitva*, his own composition, we meet many old friends, Moussorgsky, Gretchaninow, Cui, etc., for the singer has been influenced in this song by the music of his countrymen, but the effectiveness of the song cannot be refuted. It is fervently devotional and intensely dramatic, and the singer projects it in a memorable way.

Gorin, we are given to understand, has made a series of recordings for Victor, which for their greater appreciation should have translations of the words included. Since Gorin possesses such a remarkable voice and can interpret his country's music so effectively, let us hope he will give us a long list of songs by the best of the Russian song writers. The accompaniments here, made under the direction of Nathaniel Schilkret in a Hollywood studio, are not in the best taste, but the recording is excellent.

—P. H. R.

STRAUSS: *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Trio Act 3*, and *Final Duet*; sung by Viorica Ursuleac (Marshallin), Erna Berger (Sophia), and Tiana Lemnitz (Octavian). Brunswick-Polydor disc No. 95033, price \$1.50.

WEBER: *Der Freischuetz*, *Wie nahte mir der Schlummer*, and *Und ob die Wolke sie verhuellt*; sung by Tiana Lemnitz. Brunswick-Polydor disc 95032, price \$1.50.

LEMNITZ has been hailed in England and on the Continent as one of the greatest living sopranos. In her selections from *Der Freischuetz*, she proves to us that press reports can be credited, for her singing of these two difficult arias is accomplished with rare beauty of tone and fine artistry. The first selection is one half of *Agathe's Prayer* from Act 2, Scene 2, while the other is *Agathe's aria* from Act 3, Scene 2. As welcome as this latter selection is on records, we cannot help but wish that Lemnitz had seen fit to sing the whole of *Agathe's Prayer*.

The *Rosenkavalier Trio* is much better from the vocal side than the orchestral. The three women's voices are well balanced; but the orchestral background is a little weak. Lemnitz has sung Octavian with great success in London. Although there is no question that the plangent quality of her voice fits this role, it cannot be honestly said that this record shows her to the advantage that the *Freischuetz* record does. The latter as a matter of fact ranks among the loveliest vocal records ever made. Recording in both cases is good.

—P. H. R.

#### NEW RECORDINGS OF THE FRIENDS OF RECORDED MUSIC

ARIOSTI: *Cantata for Voice, Viola d'Amore, and Piano*; sung by Lucile Dresskell, soprano, with Miles Dresskell, viola d'amore, and Sara Knight, piano. Friends of Recorded Music Disc No. 8.

SCRIABINE: *Fourth Sonata in F sharp major*, *Opus 30*; played by Katherine Ruth Heyman. FRM disc No. 7.

SCHOENBERG: *Klavierstueck, Opus 11, No. 2*; and *SCRIABINE: Flammes Sombres Opus 73*; played by Katherine Ruth Heyman. FRM disc No. 9.

THESE are the finest recordings issued to date by the *Friends of Recorded Music*, having been recorded in the studios of one of the regular companies.

Mrs. Dresskell, who gave a New York recital earlier this year, possesses a voice

which recalls that of Elisabeth Schumann in her prime. Her singing of this lovely 17th century cantata is vocally ingratiating and eminently musically, and the playing of her husband on the viola d'amore and Miss Knight at the piano is equally fine.

This lovely music dates from about 1690. The cantata is unpublished; the Dresskells obtained their manuscripts from the Leipzig Library. Ariosti, born in Bologna in 1666, was a Dominican friar who gave up his ecclesiastical profession for that of music. He resided for some time in London, where he was for a short period a teacher of Handel. He was engaged along with Handel and Bononcini to write operas alternately for the theatre. The present cantata, in which the singer speaks of the "gentil viola," is written in the manner of a duet for the voice and viola d'amore, an instrument on which Ariosti was an accomplished performer. The cantata is in two parts, the first an Air (*Adagio*), and the second a contrasting section marked *Allegro*.

Katherine Ruth Heyman should need no introduction to our readers. She is the greatest living exponent of the music of Alexander Scriabine, the Russian musical mystic. A first effort to obtain a satisfactory recording of Miss Heyman's remarkable performance of Scriabine's poetic *Fourth Sonata* was unsatisfactory, but the present recording, made during the past month, has proved entirely satisfactory to Miss Heyman and the Society's committee.

Schoenberg's three pieces for piano, *Opus 11*, are his first compositions for the keyboard written in his advanced style using the twelve-tone scale. Miss Heyman says of this music: "as in Bach, there is pattern here, predominating over melody; but there is also a poignant pathos derived from the use of the semitone in every possible mode of departure from the unison. While this interval is characteristic of much of 20th century music, it lends itself to the peculiarly individual expression of each composer." In her recent New York recital, Miss Heyman played the *Klavierstueck, Opus 11, No. 2*, which the Society has recorded, after a composition of Bach, thus illustrating her contention.

Scriabine's *Flammes Sombres* is an etude from his penultimate opus. The music is descriptive and most effective, particularly as Miss Heyman plays it. It is usually necessary for her to repeat it whenever she plays it in concert.

—P. G.

# Record Collector's Corner

By JULIAN MORTON MOSES

**D**URING a recent radio broadcast, Deems Taylor, himself a person of importance in the operatic world, paid gracious and well-deserved tribute to the genius of the late Oscar Hammerstein. It put me in mind of a suggestion I had once read, I believe it was by Carl Van Vechten, that nothing more fitting could be done than to erect a statue to him in the Times Square he helped so much to create. A gay and commanding figure, Hammerstein would have to be done by a sculptor of no mean ability in order to capture for us that sparkle and sincerity extolled by his contemporaries, and which members of my family who were once associated with him assure me were genuinely his.

Many groups, vaudeville, the legitimate stage, and others, have reason to be grateful to Oscar Hammerstein but none so much as the fraternity (sic) of record collectors. If they ever succeed in seriously meeting together (which, at the present moment, looks very doubtful) they might well incorporate as part of their general aims some fitting memorial to this greatest of our impressarios. Had it not been for the devastating competition given the powerful Metropolitan Opera Company by Hammerstein's own group at the Manhattan, it is likely that many of the artists we now treasure would not have made their way on to the surfaces of domestic records or, in some instances, any at all. The roster of his company is too long to print in its entirety and too important throughout to make any deletions.

Among the outstanding singers he introduced was the magnificent contralto, Jeanne Gerville-Reache. A part of the French contingent that first unraveled to unsuspecting New Yorkers the beauty of *Pelléas et Mélisande* (she had been the original Génévieve at the Paris Opéra Comique, April 30, 1902) she also assisted in the first performance here of Strauss's *Elektra* in a French version. At the same time, she sang the standard operatic repertoire and was conceded to be the most ideal Delilah not alone of her day but ever heard here. But contral-

tos are notoriously versatile. It is not this alone which distinguishes her.

Born in the Basque country of half-Spanish descent, Gerville-Reache possessed superbly that much maligned and little understood *temperament* helpful if not essential to the truly great opera stars. Furthermore, she was a genuine contralto, a species rare in modern musical history. In some ways, the nearest approach to her voice today is to be found in Bruna Castagna (it was more evident when she was still at the Hippodrome and needed not to worry about being 'artistic' — her *L'amo come il fulgor* in *La Gioconda* was then the most luscious vocalization in this city). Unlike this young Italian prima donna, who is being neglected for domestic talent (collectors might attend to this as the second item on their program), Gerville-Reache made records for Victor very soon after her début. Among the fifteen titles beginning with the *Air des larmes* from *Werther* (which bore the odd number 81089 for a very short time) there is one item in

## THE AMERICAN RECORD COLLECTORS' ASSOCIATION

Issues a Monthly

### Auction Sheet of Rare Cut-out Recordings

made famous by celebrated artists of the acoustic era on discs and cylinders.

Those interested in obtaining the auction list should send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the Association, care of

**THE AMERICAN MUSIC LOVER**  
12 East 22nd St., New York City

Record Collectors desiring to dispose of rare cut-out recordings are invited to communicate with the Association.

Italian (*Stride la vampa* from *Il Trovatore*) and one in German (*Ich grolle nicht*). The others, which are in French, include the unusual *Air du Tigre* from Massé's *Paul et Virginie* (88317), one of the most beautiful records ever made, the justly popular *Air de Lia* from *L'Enfant Prodigue* (88281) in its best recorded version and Sapho's *O ma lyre immortelle* (88166) from Gounod's setting of the text (more of which anon). In addition, there is a breath-taking rendition of Delilah's *Printemps qui commence* and one not so good of *Mon coeur s'ouvre a ta voix* (this selection being better done in the more complete version which Columbia coupled with an inaudible *Amour, viens aider* from the same opera as their only evidence of her art — A5533). More would have been forthcoming from his latter source, perhaps, had not an unfortunate poisoning ended so tragically early her already enviable career.

GOUNOD: *Sapho, O Ma Lyre Immortelle*; and MEYERBEER: *Le Prophète, O Pretres de Baal*; sung by Ernestine Schumann-Heink, with orchestra. International Record Collectors' Club, twelve-inch disc, price \$2.25 (Memorial Edition).

IT is just five years since the record collecting hobby received its greatest impetus through the courageous action of Mr. William H. Seltsam in offering to a public of then dubious size the first of a distinguished series of repressings and re-recordings of famous vocal records at an inexpensive price. Since that time, collectors have had much occasion to be grateful to Mr. Seltsam, not least of all for this current coupling of two rare Schumann-Heink pieces, both out of the catalogue over twenty years. The *Sapho* aria (Original No. 88212) was recorded October 1909, put on sale February 1910 and withdrawn during 1913. A noble melody, it is more smoothly sung here than on the Gerville-Reache record mentioned above, though with considerably less fire and opulent tone, albeit a final high B flat is introduced. On the reverse side, we have the long missing first part to the *Prison Scene* aria which, for some unknown reason, lived on twenty years after the vivisection. It comprises in itself a complete *aria da capo* with a short recitative and boasts a grand style and one or two shrieks from Schumann-Heink. Everyone will want it to complete his collection.

THOMAS: *Mignon, Del suo cor calmai le pene*; and FERRARI, *Le Lazzarone*, and GEORGES, *Le Filibustier*; sung by Pol Plancon, with orchestra and piano respectively. International Record Collectors' Club, twelve-inch disc, price \$2.25.

THE inimitable Plancon was probably a perfect *Lothario*, the only thing marring this version of the *Mignon Lullaby* being the fact it is in Italian when French is such a help to the music — and to Plancon. It dates from 1908, the year in which the other side (recorded in 1905) was withdrawn from the catalogue. Here, in his native tongue, the singer does more than justice by two songs of slight musical value but sufficiently appealing when sung by him.

## TWO LETTERS

### THE AMERICAN LOVER

Gentlemen,

I am very sorry, but here are bad news—my subscription to your wonderful magazine expired, and I am in no position to renew it. The reason is, nobody is allowed to send any money abroad.

I wish you could know how much I liked your magazine, each number brought new ideas to me.

But—I can't give you anything but Love. So let's say Good-Bye.

All my best wishes for the future!

Yours faithfully,

(Name deleted for obvious reasons)

Munich, Germany, March 14th, 1937

\* \* \* \*

To the Editor.

Dear Mr. Reed:—

I have two questions to ask, both of which might well be answered in the magazine because of their general interest.

Firstly, could you tell me whether a chromium needle used on say a dozen Victor sides could then be used on Columbia grooves without injuring them? Naturally the principle would hold true with other makes of records. In other words, are the grooves of different brands of different shapes, and if so would the wearing down of a hard needle to one shape render it harmful to others?

Secondly may we expect an index for the back numbers of the AML? It seems to me a thing of consistent usefulness, especially in regard to the record notes. If so an arrangement for binders might also be considered, as the magazine is one for continued reference.

Kindest regards,

J. M. Howard

Evanston, Ill., March 23, 1937

(Editor's note: If a chromium needle is not used more than 35 times, we are informed it can be safely used on different brands of records. The general difference in grooves is occasioned by the number of lines used to the inch and also by the depth. The magazine intends to issue an index for Volume 2. We are also endeavoring to locate a good binder at a moderate price.)

# In the Popular Vein

By HORACE VAN NORMAN

## BALLROOM DANCE

AAA—*Sweet Is the Word for You*, and *In a Little Hula Heaven*, both from *Waikiki Wedding*. Tommy Dorsey and his Orchestra. Victor 25532.

A couple of Robin-Rainger tunes from the current Bing Crosby vehicle very neatly handled by the smooth but swingy Dorsey combine.

*Sweet Is the Word for You* is the sort of saccharine slush that no treatment, however inspired, could do very much with, but Dorsey does his valiant best, while the *Hula Heaven* thing, which is just one of those Hawaiian matters, reminding you a little bit of every Hawaiian or quasi-Hawaiian tune from Kalua down, is glorified by Dorsey into a little gem of highly danceable nonsense. There are several quite intriguing effects in it, including some funny unison trumpet business and a bit of trombone work by Tommy that for sly salacity takes the cake. It's a good thing that Mr. Sumner is tone deaf, or a couple of passages in this disc would never get by his nose for pornography.

\* \* \* \*

AAA—*Swing High, Swing Low*, and *My Little Buckaroo*. Russ Morgan and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7833.

*Swing High, Swing Low* is an engaging, swift-moving tune that practically arranges and plays itself. Needless to say, Morgan does a better-than-good job on it, although you'll wish mightily that the distressing vocal chorus could somehow be cut out of the record with a knife. *My Little Buckaroo* is this month's rewriting of *The Last Roundup* and *Wagon Wheels*, and appears to be from a something entitled *Cherokee Strip*, which inevitably suggests Gypsy Rose Lee.

\* \* \* \*

AAA—*Too Marvelous for Words*, and *Just a Quiet Evening*, both from *Ready, Willing and Able*. Eddie Duchin and his Orchestra. Victor 25517.

Johnny Mercer and Dick Whiting, two of our ablest song-writers, have collaborated on the score of *Ready, Willing and Able*, and while the results are none too extraordinary, judging from these two supposedly hit numbers from the film, it is at least pleasurable to hear occasionally tunes which are musically intelligent, and combined, as here, with lyrics which are not an affront to the mentality of a six-year old. Duchin gives them his customary sonorous treatment, with very soulful vocals by Jerry Cooper, who again does his famous Crosby imitation.

\* \* \* \*

AA—*Sweethearts*, and *Sylvia*. Wayne King and his Orchestra. Victor 25528.

More chocolate-covered marshmallows of the sort that King knows so well how to concoct. *Sweethearts* is one of Victor Herbert's most luscious tunes and King is doing a rather creditable thing in reviving it.

AA—*Our Song*, and *The Whistling Boy*, both from *When You're In Love*. Leo Reisman and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7834.

These two waltzes from the current Grace Moore film are both from the pen of Jerome Kern, but I suspect that neither will add much lustre to his fame. *The Whistling Boy* has the lovable melodic weave that is so characteristic of Kern, although in a rather inferior way, but *Our Song* could have been turned out by almost any Broadway (or Hollywood) hack. Reisman, always adept at Kern and at waltzes too, does his level best to make them interesting, but without very much success.

\* \* \* \*

## HOT JAZZ

AAAA—*Marie*, and *Song of India*. Tommy Dorsey and his Orchestra. Victor 25523.

This disc seems in a fair way to become one of the most commercially successful hot recordings ever issued. In the comparatively short time since its release, it has rolled up an almost unprecedented sales total. Just why this should be so is not entirely clear, but we have our own idea. We believe it's the vocal of *Marie* that's slaying them, and an undeniably witty notion it is, to be sure. You'll have to hear it for yourself to fully appreciate it; in cold type, however, it may be described simply as a perfectly straight chorus by the male vocalist, with a thoroughly conventional rhythmic figure in the background which would normally be played by either the band or by a solo instrument, but which in this case is sung, with words, in unison by the other members of the band. Doesn't sound very exciting, does it? And it certainly hasn't the merit of originality, since Paul Tremaine was doing the same thing years ago, but the young fry can hardly be expected to know that. Aside from this, it's a pretty darned good record, so it's hard to find fault with those who are buying it in droves, even though they may have such funny reasons for doing it.

\* \* \* \*

AAAA—*Runnin' Wild*, and *Tea for Two*. Benny Goodman Quartet. Victor 25529.

*Runnin' Wild* is a new high for the Goodman foursome, from a technical standpoint, at least, revealing a greater degree of cohesion and downright brilliance of execution than anything the group has yet done. *Tea for Two* misses fire completely, which is of course a pity, but you can't expect an inhuman degree of perfection from any group, even when as prodigiously gifted as these lads have proved themselves to be. A measure of the amazingly rapid growth of public interest in the very best type of swing may be gained from viewing the visibly high popularity of the Goodman Quartet discs. The group, in its own highly individual way, is purveying about the purest swing extant.



AAA—*You're Laughing at Me*, and *I Can't Break the Habit of You*. "Fats" Waller and his Rhythm. Victor 25530.

"Fats" caresses the celesta lovingly in *You're Laughing at Me*, and in doing so gives us what is (all things considered) the recorded version which best captures the spirit of the tune, despite his rather disquieting vocals.

\* \* \*

AAA—*Tiger Rag*, and *Skeleton Jungle*. The Original Dixieland Five. Victor 25524.

AAA—*Bluin' the Blues*, and *Clarinet Marmalade*. The Original Dixieland Five. Victor 25525.

More of the real McCoy, as far as pioneer jazz is concerned. No need to pay fantastic prices for Original Dixieland discs, when you can get their replicas on current lists for the nominal sum of seventy-five cents (not to mention the immeasurably better recording and surfaces).

\* \* \*

AAA—*My Last Affair*, and *The Mood That I'm In*. Lionel Hampton and his Orchestra. Victor 25527.

A new recording combo, and a highly promising one. Built around the phenomenal talents of Goodman's vibraphone wizard, it is made up of colored luminaries, excepting Vido Musso, and will surely go places.

---

## Swing Music Notes

By ENZO ARCHETTI

The United Hot Clubs of America's New York branch suddenly came to life on March 14th, much to the astonishment of everybody, especially its members, with a super-colossal jam session which has probably never had its equal in hot jazz history. This use of movie-advertising superlatives may seem, to some, that the blah is being laid on pretty thickly but I assure everyone within ear-shot that all the longest superlatives in the dictionary are well deserved this time.

The affair was skillfully engineered with the greatest of secrecy by the officials of the Club: cards of invitation mailed only a few days before the actual event brought an eager crowd to the Columbia Recording Studios. It packed every inch of space in the place. After nearly a year of starvation, the members came *en masse*, hungry for jam. And when it was served for four solid hours it was found to be good, plentiful, and satisfying. Any grouse the members may have had for the apparent neglect of the Club by its officials has now been dissolved by a warm feeling of gratitude and satisfaction. And no wonder. First of all John Hammond presented the entire Count Basie Orchestra, a new group from Kansas City which is rapidly building up a reputation, during its short stay in the East, as a first rate swing band. It is an eight-piece organization, with a vocalist, consisting of Count Basie, piano; Buck Clayton, trumpet; Lester Young and Hersal Evans, tenor saxes; Dan Minor, trombone; Walter Paige, bass; Freddie Green, guitar; Jones, drums; and James Rusking, vocalist. Their opening on the jam session set the mood for the afternoon. They could *swing*! One man from this group stood out prominently and brought bursts of applause from the audience for his playing, tone

and ideas — Lester Young. Here, surely, is one of the great tenor men of the day. Later, Frank Newton, the fine Negro trumpeter who has improved so greatly during the last year, joined Count Basie's orchestra to swing a few more. From then on the riot was on. Ella Fitzgerald sang *Organ Grinder's Swing* and *My Last Affair* with Chic Webb on traps and Billy Kyle (pianist with the Blue Rhythm Band) on piano. Frank Newton and Billy Kyle, with the rhythm section of Count Basie's band, formed another jam group. Then Benny Goodman arrived, still in his make-up for his Paramount Theatre show, and he joined in a trio never before heard anywhere — Goodman, clarinet; Chick Webb, drums; and Joe Bushkin, piano. Later another trio was formed around Chick Webb but this time Artie Shaw took Benny Goodman's place and Duke Ellington played piano. The session gradually swung over to the white man's kind of swing. With Joe Bushkin on piano, Joe Marsala on clarinet, Eddie Condon on guitar, George Whetling on drums, and Marty Marsala, Lips Paige, and Frank Newton as intermittent members of this quintet, swing took on a different air — a pleasant contrast to what had gone on before. Duke Ellington played a piano solo medley of his works while the next group was being formed. When it did come on it consisted of Mezz Mezzrow, clarinet; Frank Newton, trumpet; Grant Forbes, piano; and George Whetling, drums. A grand quartet it was too, except for Mezz. Somehow, something of his playing such as we knew it on records was missing.

By this time the clock had raced around to seven o'clock. Some of the crowd had left but the spirit of the jam session was still going strongly. As a splendid climax to this day of jazz Chick Webb, Duke Ellington, Rex Stewart, and Ella Fitzgerald formed a marvelous quartet, the like of which has never been heard before. They relaxed completely and had a grand time among themselves — to the delight of the audience that had remained. The finale was the highlight of the entire jam session. Rex was superb. No mere showman here. He has often been accused of that. But in this quartet he was a solid swingster, supported by some of the grandest drumming ever heard from Chick Webb. Duke helped with some excellent piano work — when he recovered from his amazement at Chick's and Rex's duets.

With such a line-up of artists it is no wonder that this jam session was such a success. It just couldn't help it. A vote of thanks for John Hammond, Marshall Stearns, Milton Gabler, and Helen Oakley, for their part in making it the grand event it was! And that notorious little bird has whispered to me that another jam session will be held soon, probably towards the end of April, by the U.H.C.A. This one will have Tommy Dorsey and his orchestra as its nucleus.

March was an especially auspicious month for swing music. The Saturday Night Swing Club, on WABC, changed its time to 7:00 P.M. Saturday as well as its signature tune but its standards are as high as ever. On the 13th, one of the outstanding programs of its entire series was aired — with Duke Ellington; his entire works were played and, all in all, they confirmed once more what has always been this writer's opinion: Duke is still tops!

At midnight on the 17th Duke and his entire orchestra opened at the Cotton Club in New York with Ethel Waters, George Dewey Washington, and the Nicholas Brothers. From the looks of things they are due for as long a stay as, or longer than Cab Calloway, whom they followed into this spot. On

the same night Joe Marsala's new band (Joe and Marty Marsala, Edith Condon, Joe Bushkin, and George Whelling) opened at the Hickory House. On the evidence of their work at the jam session, this band, too, is headed for a top place. At the Saturday Night Swing Club, in addition to Duke, Adrian Rollini (with a new trio), Earl Hines, Billy Kyle, Fats Waller, Romona, Joe Soda, and Al Duddy played. Count Basie and his orchestra played a week at the Apollo in Harlem, as did Earl Hines and his orchestra. Surely, March was a red letter month!

Phil Cohan, the director of the Saturday Night Swing Club, has promised, for the early part of April, Duke Ellington, Chick Webb, and Artie Shaw as a *trio*, just as they had been at the colossal jam session on March 14th. That is something to look forward to!

An often discredited story which has come to be looked upon as a myth has really materialized. Irving Mills, of publishing house fame, and manager of Duke Ellington, has formed his own recording company. The first recordings will be issued early in April under the names of *Master* and *Variety*. *Master* records, which will sell at 75 cents, have recorded, among others, the orchestras of Duke Ellington, Hudson-De Lange, Raymond Scott, Clyde Lucas, Ferde Grofe, Mario Braggiotti, and Jack Denny. Under the *Variety* label will appear the orchestras of Red McKenzie, Stuff Smith, Cab Calloway, Lucky Millander, Ben Pollack, Ray Bauduc, and two small groups from Ellington's orchestra headed by Rex Stewart and Barney Bigard respectively. *Variety* records will sell for 35 cents.

Among the first recordings made for these new discs are several new Ellington tunes, including *Caravan*, which promises to be another Ellington masterpiece. The Raymond Scott Quintet has also recorded *Powerhouse* and *Twilight in Turkey* which it will be remembered, had been urged in this column last month. All in all, this promises to be a very interesting new series of records.

In a town in New Jersey, just on the other side of the Hudson River, seated within an oval bar surrounded by bottles of every description, is a young Negro. Tall, powerfully built, genial, and witty, he exchanges wisecracks with the customers and plays tunes they call out on a small piano half hidden under the counter. The requests are usually for off-color comic songs of the *Sweet Violets* type, or melodious song hits of the moment. But through the banality of the music he is asked to play can be heard an occasional flash of talent for improvisation. When this writer tried him out on some numbers like *Honeysuckle Rose*, *Stompin' at the Savoy*, etc., the real worth of this pianist immediately became evident. Here is a swing pianist with a distinct style, slightly reminiscent of Fats Waller, but thoroughly individual. His technique is amazing, the more so because he cannot read a note of music — a characteristic he has in common with many great figures in jazz. His imagination is almost unbelievable. Here is a player who deserves to be "discovered". He should be on top, with a good hot band, where he could really let himself go. His name is Harry Jones and this column predicts that when he is "discovered" his name will be as great as Fats' is now.

## Radio Notes

### NBC-STRING SYMPHONY

Frank Black and the NBC-String Symphony return to the air on Wednesday evening April 7, from 9:00 to 10:00 P.M., EST, over the NBC-Blue Network. It will be heard weekly thereafter at the same time.

The first program of the new series of broadcasts will have as its feature work Dr. Black's transcription of Mendelssohn's String Quartet in E minor, Opus 44, No. 2. Besides this, the program will contain the following:

BACH-Bachrich: Sarabande, Andante, and Bourree.

ROUSSEL: Sinfonietta, Opus 52.

TSCHAIKOWSKY-Black: Variations on an Original Theme, Opus 19.

The program of April 14 will present the following selections:

BEETHOVEN-Black: Sonata, Opus 31, No. 3.

HOLST: St. Paul Suite.

WEINER: Divertimento for String Orchestra (Based on Hungarian Folk Songs and Dances).

The program of April 21 will present:

BACH-Black: Fugue in A minor.

ROSSI: Intermezzo Gondoniani, Opus 127.

SIBELIUS: Der Liebende.

ARENSKY: Variations on a Tchaikowsky Theme.

The program of April 28 will present:

BACH-Kaun: Aus Tiefer Not Schrei Ich Zu Dir.

BEETHOVEN-Black: Sonata, Opus 28.

DVORAK: Serenade Suite.

### CONCERT STARS TO VISIT CROSBY

Concert artists, who will be featured in the next four broadcasts of Bing Crosby's Music Hall program over the NBC-Red Network Thursdays from 10:00 to 11:00 p.m., EST: Kathryn Meisle, contralto, April 22; and Grete Stueckgold, soprano, April 29.

### VOICE OF FIRESTONE

Alfred Wallenstein, distinguished conductor and cellist, will become permanent conductor of the Voice of Firestone concert orchestra beginning with the program on Monday, April 5, at 8:30 p. m., EST, over the NBC-Red Network.

### CORONET

Coronet—on the Air, sophisticated new radio show featuring Deems Taylor, composer, critic and commentator, with Robert Armbruster's Orchestra, moved to the NBC-Blue Network Friday, April 2, and will be heard weekly thereafter from 9:30 to 10:00 p.m., EST.

The program comes to the air with an entirely fresh treatment of short stories, articles and even pictures from the pages of the magazine sponsoring it, interpreting them through music and dramatizations.

Deems Taylor is the absolute director of the program, and he balks at nothing he chooses to convey to the listeners. The oddities he and his musicians and radio actors have interpreted include the photograph of a bowl of goldfish, and that of four bananas dancing on a piece of wallboard. The dramatizations of stories are in the hands of a capable company of experienced radio players.

Each program secludes a musical novelty. In one broadcast, Taylor let the audience hear the "Soldiers' Chorus" by carrying a microphone from one instrument to another, with the body of the orchestra in the dim background. In another he demonstrated that all four movements of Grieg's "Peer Gynt" Suite can be played at the same time and still make pleasing harmony. Likewise, he synchronized "Swanee River," "Humoresque," Ravel's "Bolero" and "Yes. We Have No Bananas" and made good music of the result.

Widespread response that followed a three-time test over a New York local station led the show's sponsors to arrange an NBC coast-to-coast network.

#### RADIO PRODUCTION

The trick of combining words, music, sound effects and program production into a radio play will be revealed for members of the 4-H Clubs all over the country by a group of NBC experts in a series of talks on the National Farm and Home Hour, heard every Friday at 12:30 p.m., EST, over the NBC-Blue Network.

The list of talks on radio writing follows:

April 9: "Sound Effects," by M. W. Wood, head of the NBC Chicago sound effects department.

April 16: "Music," by Dr. Frank Black, General Music Director for NBC.

April 23: "Production," by C. L. Menser, production manager of the NBC Central Division.

May 7: "Characters and Dramatization in Continuity," by Ken Robinson, assistant continuity editor, NBC Central Division.

#### AMERICAN SCHOOL OF THE AIR

The American School of the Air (Columbia Broadcasting System) will present two interesting musical broadcasts during the month of April. On the 13th, the program will be devoted to music of the Bach Family, and on the 27th, to music of the Mozart Family.

The following selections will be performed:

April 13—Symphony in B flat (J. C. Bach); Movement from Sonata (C. P. E. Bach); Concerto in E minor (W. F. Bach); Dance Movements (J. S. Bach).

April 27—The Sleigh Ride (Leonold Mozart); Movement from Symphony in G minor (Leopold Mozart); Overture — Bastien and Bastienne (W. A. Mozart); Rondo for Harmonica and Orchestra (W. A. Mozart); German Dances (W. A. Mozart).

#### KREINER QUARTET ON AIR

The Kreiner Quartet have been engaged by the Columbia Broadcasting System to broadcast a cycle of all Mozart quartets. This series of weekly concerts will start the latter part of April and extend through the summer.

On April 16 at 3 P. M., EST, the Kreiner Quartet will be heard in a broadcast over the Columbia Broadcasting System. The program will include Debussy's String Quartet.

#### GENERAL MOTORS PROMENADE CONCERT

The General Motors Promenade Concerts, Spring series of the General Motors Concerts, will be inaugurated over the NBC-Blue Network from 8:00 to 9:00 P. M., EST, on Sunday April 4. The broadcast will be the first for the General Motors series at the new time on the Blue network. The programs will be broadcast from Carnegie Hall.

The 70-piece General Motors Symphony Orchestra

augmented by a newly organized Glee Club of 16 male voices will be the basis upon which the Promenade Concerts will be built each week. Erno Rapee, who has been conductor of the General Motors Concerts, will be the conductor for the Spring series.

The greatest vocalists in the world will continue to be the week-to-week highlights of the Promenade programs, and in addition, some of the most famous voices in the lighter musical world of the operetta will be presented.

As in last year's Promnade Concerts — in deference to the passing of the more serious and formal Winter season — lighter music selected from operetta, comic opera, and like fields will be included in the programs.

---

#### MORE ABOUT NEEDLES

(Continued from Page 406)

But what is more important is the reduction in wear. As metallic needles wear, the portion of the needle worn away remains imbedded in the grooves in very finely powdered form. This powdered metal acts as an abrasive, just as so much emery powder in the grooves, and each time the record is played it grinds and roughens the surface of the groove. A certain amount of this abrasive powder is bound to be present on or worked up on the sides of the grooves, and the sides become rough and noisy. In a fibre needle the portion of the needle which wears is a soft material, like for instance, wood-flour, which is more easily removed from the grooves and even though it remains there can do little damage.

Mr. Reed's comparison of the collector and the music lover is interesting. I believe, however, that a person without any collecting instincts, whose primary interest is to enjoy music properly reproduced, is also interested in preserving the face of the record in order that he may hear the music properly reproduced *in the future*. A true music lover looks forward to hearing the music again. To me, the present enjoyment of the music would be detracted from somewhat by the thought that the possibility of reproducing it again in the same manner was being destroyed or diminished by the present playing of it.

The needle problem is an individual problem. In general, it seems to me that if the proper type of non-metallic needle is selected (I recommend the B. C. N. Emerald), and changed often enough to prevent shouldering, a satisfactory compromise is obtained, namely, enough high frequencies to make the music listenable, a low enough scratch level not to detract materially from the music, and a minimum of wear on the records so that they may be played more times during their natural life before excessive noise develops.

# THE FRIENDS OF RECORDED MUSIC

## A Society Sponsored by The AMERICAN MUSIC LOVER

The records issued by this Society are available in all music stores that sell **The American Music Lover** and to members of the society. Every subscriber of the magazine is a potential society member. Membership in the society will cost \$2.75 a year, which will include a subscription to the magazine, and permit the member to purchase his records at \$1.50 instead of \$2.00 which they will cost in the stores. Membership fee to all existent subscribers will be 50 cents for the first year.

### The Records Issued to Date

**BOCCHERINI:** String Quartet in A major, Opus 33, No. 6, played by Kreiner Quartet. Discs 1 and 2.

**MOZART:** String Quartet in E flat, K-171, played by Kreiner Quartet. Discs 3 and 4.

**GRIFFES:** An Indian Sketch, Kreiner Quartet, and The Lament of Iam the Proud, William Hain, tenor, with Jerome T. Bohm at piano. Disc 5.

**JOSEPH MARX:** Lieder, In meinen Traueme Heimat, and Der Rauch; sung by Paul Engel, baritone, with Mr. Bohm at piano. Disc 6.

**SCRIABINE:** Fourth Sonata; Katherine Ruth Heyman. Disc 7.

**ARIOSTI:** Cantata for Voice, Viola d'Amore and Piano. Lucile Dresskell, soprano; Miles Dresskell, viola d'amore; Sara Knight, piano. Disc 8.

**SCHOENBERG:** Klavierstueck, Opus 11, No. 2, and **SCRIABINE:** Flammes Sombres, Opus 73. Katherine Ruth Heyman. Disc 9.

---

### Advisory Board for The Friends of Recorded Music

Carl Engel — Lee Pattison — Carleton Sprague Smith — Albert Stoessel

---

For further particulars write **The American Music Lover**, 12 East 22nd Street, New York City.

If you have friends who you think would be interested in the recordings or in **The American Music Lover**, please send us their names so that we can forward a circular or a sample copy of the magazine.

## *The* Gramophone

Edited by Compton Mackenzie  
and Christopher Stone

—An independent magazine devoted to  
the interest of the gramophone user.

—reviews month by month every record  
issued by the British companies.

—contains literary contributions, biogra-  
phies, translations and technical articles.

Annual Subscription \$3.50

*Write for specimen copy*

10a, Soho Square, London W. 1,  
England

## THE BRITISH MUSICIAN and Musical News

53, Barclay Road, Warley Woods,  
Birmingham, England

*Write for a specimen copy*

Annual Subscription: 7/6 (\$1.80)

"Sidney Grew, editor of the British Musi-  
cian, is one of the wisest writers on musical  
matters in the British Empire. His criticisms  
are always helpful. His love for music . . .  
makes him a crusader — and we need  
crusaders today."

—Musical Canada

"I like the sincerity of the British Musician,  
its affectionate handling of real music, —  
its composers and exponents. And how IT  
loves the great masters!"

—C. E. Henning

## THE MUSICAL QUARTERLY

CARL ENGEL, Editor

\$3.00 a Year

75c a Copy

Contents of April, 1937 Issue

Vol. XXIII, No. 2

PERCY GRAINGER, COSMOPOLITAN COMPOSER	Charles W. Hughes (White Plains)
THE DUAL PERSONALITY OF GREAT COMPOSERS	Margit Varro (Budapest)
ANTONIA BEMBO, COMPOSER TO LOUIS XIV	Yvonne Rokseth (Paris)
MEDIAEVAL QUARTAL HARMONY: A PLEA FOR RESTORATION—PART I	Joseph Yasser, N. Y.)
NEW LIGHT ON "THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER"	JOHN A. KOUWENHOVEN (N. Y.)
	and LAWTON M. PATTEN (Yonkers)
MEDIAEVAL BYZANTINE MUSIC	H. J. W. TILLYARD (Cardiff, Wales)
EARLY GERMAN KEYBOARD MUSIC	WILLI APEL (Watertown, Mass.)

VIEWS AND REVIEWS

QUARTERLY BOOK-LIST

QUARTERLY RECORD-LIST

Price, Seventy-five Cents

"By far the most important of the American periodicals from the point of view of musical scholarship is the MUSICAL QUARTERLY. It is a serious review, cosmopolitan in character, and has published valuable contributions from most of the leading writers of music in Europe and America."

—Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians.

Published by

G. SCHIRMER, Inc., 3 East 43rd Street, New York City

*th*  
*J.W.*



W.

City